

THE  
HIGHER LIFE  
IN ART

LECTURES ON THE  
BARBIZON SCHOOL



JOHN LA FARGE



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# THE HIGHER LIFE IN ART



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A SERIES OF LECTURES ON  
THE BARBIZON SCHOOL OF FRANCE  
INAUGURATING THE SCAMMON COURSE AT  
THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

BY

JOHN LA FARGE



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## THE SCAMMON LECTURES

*John Young Scammon, a prominent citizen of Chicago, was deeply concerned in everything pertaining to the higher life of the city. He had the active co-operation of his wife, Mrs. Maria Sheldon Scammon, interested in all the works of her time, and especially devoted to the fine arts. Mrs. Scammon, who survived her husband, provided by her will for a fund, left to the Art Institute of Chicago, for lectures upon the history, theory and practice of the fine arts, to be known as "The Scammon Lectures." In May, 1903, Mr. La Farge delivered at the Art Institute the first course of Scammon lectures. Unforeseen circumstances have delayed until now the publication of this first series.*





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# FIRST LECTURE

*These lectures addressed to students but also to a future large audience as being the beginning of the record of the Scammon lectures. The choice of a subject determined somewhat by memories of interest in the art of France some fifty years ago. There and then war raged, as very usual, in the world of art and literature. Certain names such as those of Ingres and Delacroix represented the main conflicting ideas. Appreciations of that time for Millet, Rousseau, Dupré, Corot, Gérôme, Diaz, Decamps. Men of a still older school had memories of the eighteenth century by which they judged. No one artist absolutely recognized as a full authority. Chassériau; his unfulfilled promise of conciliating opposites. His early death. His influence on Puvis de Chavannes. His view of the advantage of passing from one school to another's influence. Chassériau's admiration for Delacroix; at that moment the turn of the tide against that great painter. Some description of his life, his ideas; the character of his works. His dramatic expression not theatrical. The tendency and practice of painting for some long period had been more and more towards a set scene as in the theatre. Nature, of course, the absolute reverse. Delacroix also loved beauty as an aim: wherein we see Millet differ. As also the Realists, who were, like Millet, in harmony with the master through admiration. Notice of the poorer technical work of the middle and end of the nineteenth century. Loss of mechanical methods of the past and the new unsettled.*

## FIRST LECTURE

**M**R. PRESIDENT, ladies and gentlemen, and my fellow-students (notwithstanding my greater age, I am still a student) : First I shall say a few words concerning my choice of subject for these lectures, and I need also to remark that these lectures are of a special nature. They are addressed to students, but they are also addressed to a larger audience and a future one, as they form the beginning of the record of the Scammon lectures.

Now, one of the dreams that beset the older man is the possibility of giving some of his experience to the younger, as you know, sometimes to your cost. Ever since man was man the older generation has handed down what it could of its memories and its experiences. Some of them have survived ; many are lost ; but we are built up entirely of these memories from the time when our ancestor, under the name of Prometheus, inherited the invention of the use of fire. From them to the text books that we use to-day, we are but a series of memories



## FIRST LECTURE

reflected upon other memories, which, set at so many angles, give us what we think to be new points of view. Therefore the older man feels justified in talking of his memories, though he may know that only a few of them are to be of any use. That is to say, they may not be of much use at the moment, but there is at some time a possibility of their filling a serious gap of need. So, for instance, the historian has always accumulated his facts and his reasonings, and long after we see that it might have been possible to use his information, and occasionally some of us do so. These ideas have come up to me more especially upon my deciding the precise subject which shall be a theme—what the French call a *canvass*—for the statements and perhaps the reasonings which I may address to you.

On being asked to give a course of lectures to the working students of the Institute (which lectures were also to be heard by persons interested in artistic matters), I naturally felt the difficulty of a choice that might meet two far distant extremes. I knew that any subject might be of use, not because of the subject itself, but because of its necessary development—the explanations about it. These coming from the reserve fund of experience, might interest the student even if by no more than quickening his perceptions, encourag-

## FIRST LECTURE

ing him to think, and still more to live for himself. I mean, to live for that part of him in which he increases his understanding of art, his love for it, and his judgment of how best he can employ his natural faculties. Still the question would come up as to what might be the more natural way of addressing the student when I was not his usual teacher, when I could not tell what his antecedents were, nor his ambitions. On asking a younger man, a student whom I employed, what he thought students might wish, he told me that their one certain wish would be to know "how to get on." Taking that seriously, it seemed to me that a form of discourse which should refer to the works of men who must have had the same problem before them and met it in a special way, might be a manner of explaining one's experience by using it to look at the experience of others. In this particular case, if I wrote and spoke about artists who had lived within my own time, of whom I absolutely knew, whose life was part of my own, these real stories would be like the talk of the older professional man to the younger about what the men of his day were like, what happened to them, and the lessons of that reminiscence would come of themselves. Of course, some of this would fall by the wayside; but part of it would make the works of art by which we

## FIRST LECTURE

know the men of my day more natural, less accidental and separate, and the younger man might connect his own beginning or experience with the experience of names that he knows only as signatures or labels to pictures hung on the wall, much praised or much debated upon, and which, after all, are no more than what he himself is to rival or to continue.

If these works of art are recent he cannot help considering them. They are inevitably built into his memory by the mere mechanism of his sight. Therefore I have chosen for the subject of my talks some account of the lives of certain painters, whose effect on modern art has been so great that no painter, no artist, can avoid having been influenced by them more or less, whether he knows it or does not. I have restricted their number so that they might connect with us more closely. The experience of my own life has covered a great part of theirs. I have lived during the period when they were discussed, and through their having made their final position, and I am, as it were, a part of their story. I am part of the artistic public that followed them with interest and anxiety. The people I once knew fought for them, or fought against them, and I can go far enough back to have felt a personal triumph in their obtaining their final position. I remember how my old

## FIRST LECTURE

friend William Hunt, at the end, in 1868, after the International Exposition, came up to me and said: "Well, our men have won"; Rousseau and Corot and Millet were at last placed, and placed for good, and with them the others connected with them by mutual admiration and a similar fate of battle and final success.

The illusion of having followed these men farther back than my own childish life was very great. I had known men to whom all these names were the names of beginners. I had known men who had known the famous Greuze himself, had seen the end of the schools of the eighteenth century, and had hailed the beginning of David and the French Empire school during the French Revolution, which latter also, in large, was, as their art was in small, the promise of a new era that should settle everything. Sir Joshua Reynolds and Gainsborough were to them what Rousseau and Corot are to you—people of only a few years back. They had seen the beginnings of Turner. They had appreciated Sir Thomas Lawrence and seen him paint. This connection with the past made me feel as if I, too, had lived then and gone through some of their interest in the promises of the beginning of that nineteenth century which has just closed.

Paris has usually some artistic civil war raging, rag-

## FIRST LECTURE

ing more or less gently in the world of art and literature. In the middle of the fifties, when I was first there, the names of Ingres and Delacroix were still a battlefield. And yet most of my very young acquaintances among the artists and art students were untroubled by the dilemma of choice between these two men and the ideals they represented. These younger men were following new leaders, new names of which a few were to attain some prominence, but none to *represent the problem* in all art symbolized by the two names I have mentioned.

Courbet had made his appearance; Manet was known to only a few of us; Couture was one of our teachers, occupying a place of his own, but rather an uncertain one as far as doctrine went; he was an executant, he was not an exponent of law. Millet was known to but a few of us, and rather doubted by our leaders. They could not realise that his was to be a universal fame. Corot was accepted. Rousseau and Dupré also, even to some degree by men who disliked them and whom they disliked. Diaz was the fashion, a pet for almost all the differing schools. Men who thought Rousseau stupid, heavy, inartistic, could tell me that they recognised in Diaz a real artist compared to the bigger man, and those who told me that were among our teachers.



## FIRST LECTURE

Gérôme, now a patriarch, was a young man, full of purpose, destined to reinforce academic training in methods and subjects which the academy had never dreamed of and would have objected to.

Many of these whom I have mentioned as accepted—more or less—“arrived” as the French call it—were not, however, quite suited to the sacred places in the Holy Church of the Academy. Their names, with the one exception of the promising disciple, Gérôme, were considered as accidents, as temporary flashes, as slight tricklings outside of the strict embankments of that majestic canal built by academic art in France.

My fate was thrown in both camps, which is one of the reasons of my having the confidence of addressing you with considerable certainty, and a certainty from my earliest youth. I was with my student friends who had their special new admirations, and with my older acquaintances who preached the more arid doctrine of the school. And there were some of these last who considered that even the rigid teachings of the Academy were but a manner of feeding the young with easier doctrine. They recalled the glorious days of the passage from the eighteenth century to the nineteenth when, amid the trumpets of battle and the establishment of new formulæ of government, the great David had

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placed the limits of classic art in a way suited to the French intellect. To them even M. Ingres had a little of a poetic and sentimental turn. We younger men thought him rather dry, and they thought him too much influenced by the gentle genius of Raphael, whose works could not be packed within a rigid enough instruction, within a facility of teaching, within an easy formula, within a doctrine of "no mistake." They still retained a kindly trust in the later Italians, in Guido for instance, in the men who represented the "perfection" of art, that is to say, an art which had no mistakes, as it had, perhaps, not too much sympathy. We to-day have gone so far from these perfect artists that we are oblivious of them; we are unjust; we do not know them.

There was no one artist at that moment to carry out with sufficient authority these more ancient ideas. Therefore my ancient friends accepted the academic teaching, such as it was, and as expounded by M. Ingres, who is on record as not liking it himself, and by M. Flandrin, for one. There had been great war between the so-called Romantic school and the so-called Classical school, and the survivors seemed to be represented by the two names of Ingres and Delacroix. A singular intellectual good fortune allowed me, a looker-

## FIRST LECTURE

on in Paris, slightly interested in art, to find one little nook, a place where a debate concerning these two names was centred in one man. This man was to appear for a moment in the character of a student, and a follower of both sides, was to bloom for a short moment, to be a mere promise, to represent the past, a good deal of the future which he might be thought not to be dreaming of, and then to die suddenly, and to be almost forgotten. You will see how far forgotten. I do not know how many of you will recognise the name of Théodore Chassériau. The Exposition of 1900 brought out again a few of his works, and pious hands are reproducing as well as possible the half destroyed paintings which passed through the flames of the Commune. So that a tardy justice has brought him back to the memory of some, and to the attention of a few.

As the portraits shown at the Exposition of 1900 indicate his possession of the manner and the latent feeling of his first master, Ingres (who believed at first in the pupil's future, and in his living according to proper tradition), so the paintings on the walls of the Cour des Comptes, as well as some of his later smaller works, show the acceptance of Delacroix as a patron, and leader and master. But not only do they show this, but in the wall paintings we can also see something

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which connects with Puvis de Chavannes as he was to be, and even with Millet, only then beginning to take his later shape. So that the paintings of Chassériau, the drawings—the few drawings that you may occasionally see—are prophetic; they keep to a certain vein of academic classical refinement and attention to some side of what is called drawing, but they are animated by a certain poetic vein of imagination which was kindled by Delacroix, and here and there, in certain arrangements, in certain figures, in a tendency to some simplification, one can see the future Puvis de Chavannes, and something also of the Millet who was to come.

This was my own supposition, but within these few weeks I have learned more thoroughly that I was even mechanically correct, that Puvis kept to his death in his consultation case, as we might say, a certain number of drawings and studies of the Chassériau whom we knew, and who was the coming man, when Puvis hesitated yet as to what he should do. This young man's mind was one of assimilation. If one can use so great an example, there was something in him of the young Raphael, taking naturally to each new possibility suggested by some other artist's work. My conversations with him were few. I was a youngster talking to the coming man. Neither could I have had any more; he

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was within a short space of unexpected death. But the influence of his admiration for Delacroix, mingled with a respectful and calmer appreciation of Ingres, his master, has always remained with me as a reasonable motive, carefully considered and sufficiently vital to be of use in intellectual criticism, and in that manner feeding the flame of the torch which we artists hand from one to the other.

Chassériau had upon the younger mind, the advantage of being able to impress the lesson that technique was not all that there was in study, and especially that one technique served, or might serve, as a substratum of another very different. His example was there to show this, and his talk about Delacroix made the value of that great painter clearer.

At that moment the turn of the tide was just going against this great painter. Three years later the exposition of a series of his paintings was to be the strengthening of a small number of his friends, and the source of a series of attacks and depreciations which upon the younger men have left lasting traces. Delacroix was then getting older, though in the full maturity of his talent, which never weakened until the day of his death, only a few years later—1864.

He was a solitary man, with no equals for com-

## FIRST LECTURE

panions. He was known to the younger men at a great distance. His studio was open to anyone who wished to call, if they were students. Those who called for other motives he cared not for. Notwithstanding, we all felt a veil of something between us and him, and few of us had the courage to do more than occasionally present our respects. He was supposed to be well off by us young students, those of us who did not know, who had no personal means of knowing. After a lifetime devoted to his art all that he had managed to put aside was something like a few thousand dollars, while his fame had reached throughout the whole of Europe. But his absolute independence from the dealer, from the shop-keeper, from anything that could in any way push him, was such that the natural suggestion came up, "This man, to be so independent, is so because he needs nothing." And among us younger people, who did not know, there was this tradition. I on my part knew otherwise, but it was impossible to convince any of my young friends that this man was a poor man, working just as they did, notwithstanding his fame.

From inherited habits he appeared, and rather liked to appear occasionally, in what is strictly called "society," and he was known to all that were distinguished in literature, science, and art. Even such a thing



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as a royal visitor from some foreign country came to him occasionally. But for all that he was still a man of moods, who preferred the possession of himself to that of any others. So that the young did not know him, as I say, and his appearance in the sittings of the Institute in one of his new relations to the academic powers, tested him and marked him as a man not to be ignored, of an intelligence that must be influential, absolutely independent, and consequently dangerous, and though a just man and a humourous man he liked them not.

Thus on his death-bed he submitted ironically to a formal visit from the Institute, or the gentlemen representing it, and representing different forms of science, art, and literature, remarking when his visitors had left, "Have not these people made me suffer enough already?"

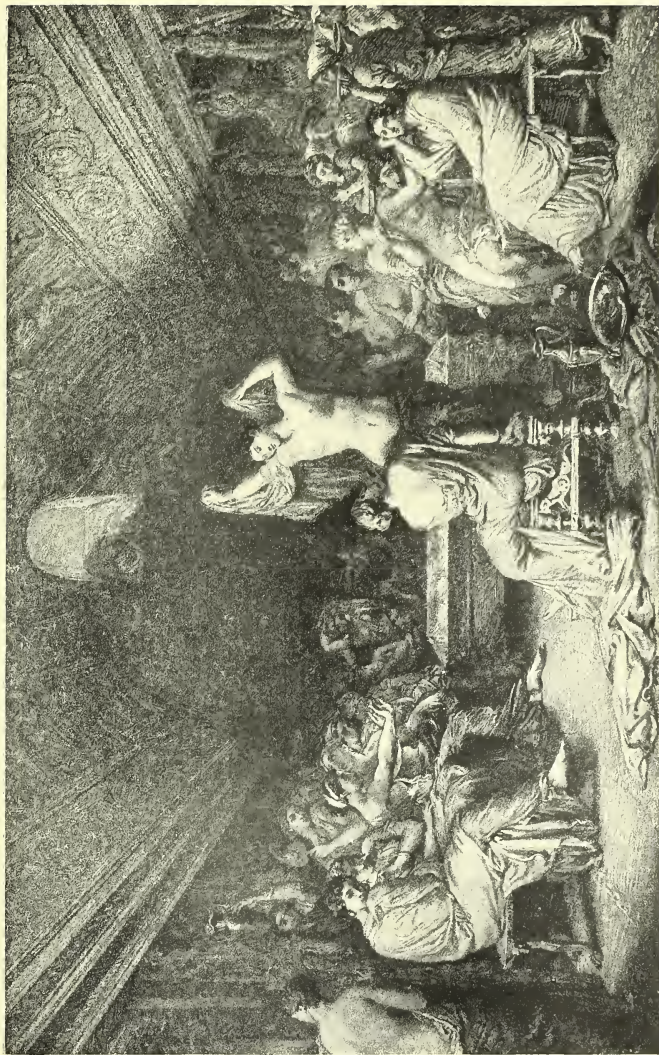
Long before, in the interrupted journal which he kept through much of his life, we find the young man's wish expressed, far back at the very beginning, "Never to belong to any of those trades of humbug which influence the human race." The secret of his career is all in this expression, which explains the independence of feeling that persists in all his work, which makes it charming when you feel like it, which is at times disagreeable, though not repulsive, when out of one's

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ordinary vein. He was passionately absorbed in one idea alone, the pursuit of art as a freedom from forms of intellectual slavery, and as allowing him to keep full possession of himself. Naturally that feeling expressed in his works met—I almost guessed at it already in my own experience—sometimes sympathy and sometimes the reverse. I know of no artist with whose mood one must happen to fall in so distinctly as with his. Of course there is the succession or continuation, of admirable colour and proud composition, but the picture is the expression of the mood; and the dramatic form which he liked and which had the shape of his time is so much the realisation of this personal impression that one does not always follow him.

Already had begun—and the siege had been laid long ago by the pupils of the great Raphael, continued through the majestic art of a few of the great French masters by the schools and the literary teaching of the eighteenth century—already had been laid out the programme of what we have to-day, so that we can hardly break away from it, we can hardly think without it—the representation of the picture as a set scene, as a thing in the theatre, as a thing carefully composed in the way that it will look best, in which the light will fall in a certain way on the main actor, and in a less important





CHASSÉRIAU: "THE ROMAN BATH"

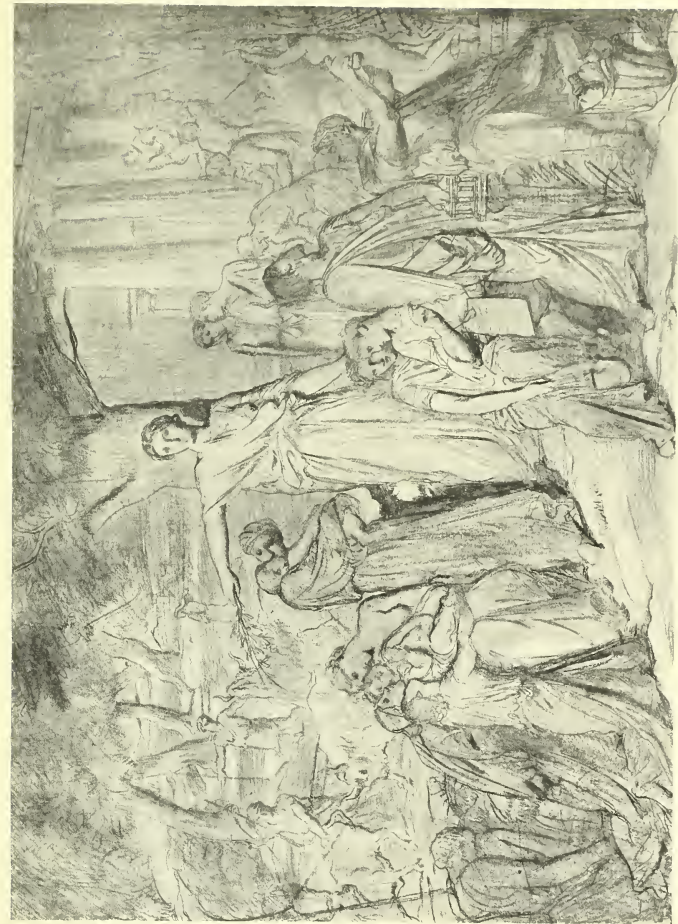
FROM LITHOGRAPH BY LAMY





CHASSÉRIAU  
"PORTRAIT OF HIS TWO SISTERS"





CHASSÉ-  
RIAU  
CARTOON  
FOR  
"PEACE"







CHASSÉRIAU

"PEACE" (Fragment)

FORMERLY IN THE COUR DES COMPTES, NOW IN THE LOUVRE



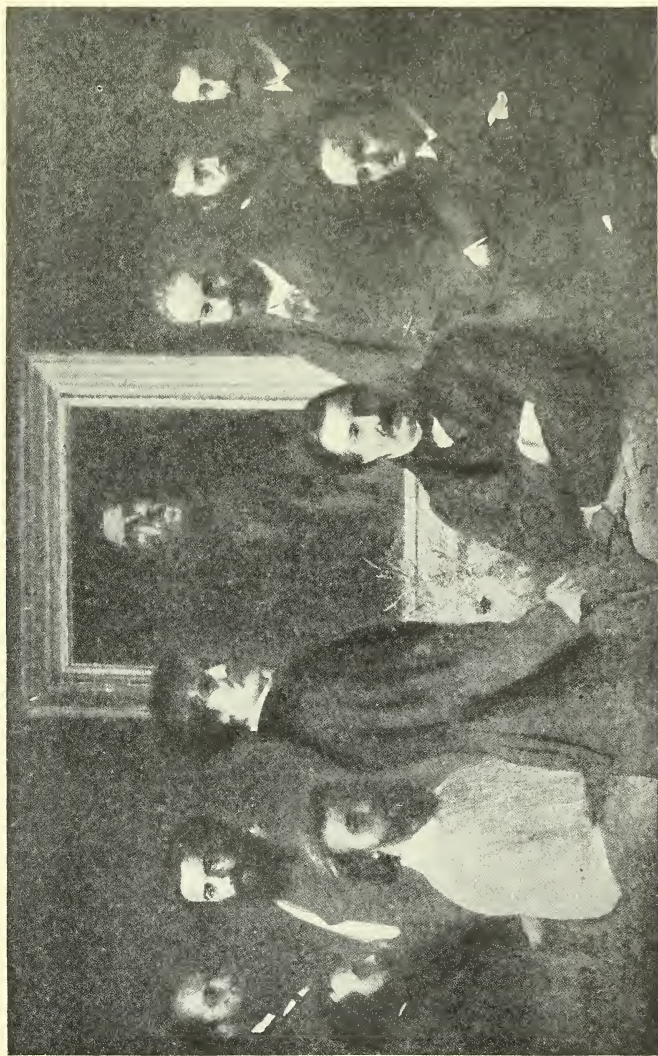


DELACROIX  
"THE BARQUE  
OF DANTE"



THE LOUVRE





FANTIN-LATOURE : "HOMMAGE A DELACROIX "

L. CORDIER  
DURANTY

LEGROS  
FANTIN

WHISTLER

CHAMPFLEURY

MANET

BRACQUEMOND DE BALLEROY  
BAUDELAIRE



## FIRST LECTURE

way on the others, in which everybody shall have a place, in which nothing shall be unsettled, *in which nothing* shall be accidental, *contrariwise to what happens* in real life. Now with Delacroix the influence of the great master, of the very great master, Rubens, which was upon him, his own personal nature, his absorption of the modern literature of other nations at that time richer than his own, of Byron, Goethe—who were far from the set forms of the rather narrow France of his day—his love of Shakespeare, all these influences moulded his view of the idea of the picture. Moreover he saw the picture *before* he painted it, before he *composed* it. It dropped upon him as the sights that you see drop upon you. For example, as the fire that I saw to-day—the groups, all necessary, because some of them were doing something and attending to it, and others were doing nothing, and contradicted what ought to have been (and would have been in the modern view of painting) a set scene, with nobody contradicting the real meaning of it. On the contrary, in the real fact, three-quarters of all the people I saw had really nothing to do with it. They were either curious chance lookers-on, or were trying to help when they should not have helped; they were doing everything that was against the composition of the modern picture; hence curves

## FIRST LECTURE

of the most enchanting beauty crossed the necessarily strict line of the horses and the firemen and whatever was necessary to do the business. And I could not help thinking that here was a sufficient proof of another variety of sight, not the so-called academic, not the correct so-called "classical," commonplace, school-boy composition.

Now further than that, this man, Delacroix, acted the story for himself, for the sensations he got out of it, for beauty of line and colour, very much as a musician might.

This different view of his is recorded in his paintings, many of which you know. The famous ones at least you know by a photograph or a print, and some of the less important you actually know by sight. Much of such views of the picture influenced also Millet, a man far removed from Delacroix in temperament, in religious feeling, in spiritual turn, in habit of life, in ironical mood. But Millet seeing Delacroix's work was struck at once by the fact that this was not the theatre arrangement, but was the way that happens in real life, or in the ancient forms of art which we know of as the works of the great masters. So deep was this impression that the theatre itself became distasteful to Millet through the naturalness of Delacroix, who seems



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to us occasionally unnatural because we have *been trained for over a century in the theatre.*

Delacroix held himself subject to many intellectual views which are really classical, and he studied deeply the ideas, the manners, and the circumstances of all the forms of older art. But that was the substratum of good sense and of culture of the intellectual man. His temperament, on the contrary, was a passionate one, and through that he belonged to the class of the very great artists, of Rembrandt and Rubens, Tintoretto and Michael Angelo, with whom the expression of a sentiment, either of peace or war, of sympathy or objection, is the main stuff and fabric, and who make their form out of the subject as they go along. Hence also, like the very few, as I have just said, he is a dramatist. All with him is more or less a drama. Those animals, in the two little pictures up-stairs, that drink are not merely a lion drinking, they are a beast lapping water; they are the animal indulging itself, the animal getting its necessary supply; they are Delacroix refreshing himself as he laps the water through the beast. He is playing this action. It is not the copy of the beast, the observation of a naturalist, it is the observation of the higher division of animated nature, recognising in the lower form that side which he can understand, and

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clothing it in the vision of the eye. Hence also as I have been saying, like the very few he is a dramatist. All with him is more or less of a drama, and I do not mean by that the plausible arrangement of the theatre, which on the contrary is, as I have been saying, the mark of all that false classical school which he distrusted, or disliked, or despised, and whose influence persists to-day in modern French art, and in most modern art everywhere. These works, however important, however the make of strong minds and good eyes, are not creations from within. They are agglutinations of probabilities such as the stage shows, such as the manager arranges, with excellent actors, with fine voices and with beautiful scenery. So, as I was just saying, we are not surprised. We merely praise such a successful ordering and placing of things. So *we* should have done if *we* had had the arranging of the world.

In the realities of the world, on the contrary, we are surprised; and sometimes we are disagreeably surprised. Things turn out differently from what we expected; accidents of all kinds happen in shapes that we had not foreseen; otherwise they would not surprise us; we should be prepared and we would almost—as we moved in the outside world—we would almost applaud. But when an artist like Delacroix gives us Apollo riding his



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chariot and shooting the poisoned arrows which his sister hurriedly hands from the quiver; or Hamlet, who pushes back with his foot the dead Polonius; or Faust, who having killed Margaret's brother by the hand of Mephistopheles, passes into the shadow of the narrow German street, we are surprised—we did not expect that; and sometimes it is disagreeable. This is what really happens in nature. This is really accident, unarranged by us. This great breath of the real world and its fates flows through all the scenes of Delacroix's paintings and his drawings. Therein, as I said, they belong to the greatest forms of art, those that we cannot foresee and we cannot arrange. And again, as I say, they are often unpleasant, except for their beauty—for they always have some form of beauty. They are always recognisant of the past of art, of certain ancient formulæ of art, of certain masses of light and shade, of certain arrangements of colour, of certain truths of colour.

With him goes the tradition of the past and of beauty for itself. With Millet, who liked Delacroix and admired him, if the story of the picture seems stronger by omitting some beauties that might occur, Millet sacrifices them without hesitation. The story is to be told at all cost, and if that story in his mind is less well

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told from a point of beauty than from a point of absolute truth, let it go, all the better. With Delacroix never does this happen. He is entirely free in everything that he does, yet keeping in mind the ancients. It may be as far back as the Greeks, it may be Michael Angelo, it may be Raphael, it may be Rubens, it is always something that he feels behind him without effort. The whole thing is the result of the ages, the expression of a very highly cultivated, intellectual *gentleman*. And yet at that moment began the realistic side of the development of French art, the realistic side carried out by some of his greatest admirers, by the other men of whom I shall speak, who, working differently, and understanding differently and placing realism as the first basis of their impression, were still in harmony with this man's work through admiration.

Time, as I say, has brought Delacroix's name back to us at a moment of revolt against mechanical excellencies. This moment is a most singular one in the question of doubt as to technical forms. We have every form of representation in our own art of painting that has ever existed, in some shape or other. We have for years, for almost fifty, gone as the men of the Renaissance did, or tried to do, to science to help us, to steady us in our formulæ. We know that the future is coming ;

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we know that we must hold on to the past, but the nineteenth century has given us bad habits of mechanical work. We have not been in all that century beautiful painters, as were the commonplace men of a further past. The very men I speak of, whose work is wonderful, whose work is beautiful, were still floundering in the ordinary mechanism of oil painting if we compare them to the eighteenth-century men, Chardin, Watteau, anybody, it does not matter who. So that, as I say, time has brought this name back again to us at a moment of revolt against mechanical excellencies which we do not compass. The power of the name will exist even with those who do not like him, and with whose ideas he could have no sympathy. This name is destined I think to become still more important as the line of the great successors in the realm of art recedes further away from us. Among them I think that this one of Delacroix will remain the keynote, the strongest expression of what was done. That does not in any manner mean that he will be a clear teacher—what is called an easy teacher. Moreover he belongs to that nineteenth century which floundered unsuccessfully but triumphantly in the use of painting.

With this I close the opening of my lectures. I shall repeat to-morrow in another shape the story of Dela-

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croix and make some beginning of notice of some of the other men. But I preferred to test, as it were, the intention of what I am going to do by some consideration of a man who will be later a type of all I have to say, and whose name would be one of what the ancients called good augury.

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*The subject, Delacroix the precursor. The name of Barbizon school a misnomer, an accidental grouping of things with little connection. It is a pity that this name should be continued by habit. It is a mere expression of the fact that certain painters happen to have lived for a time within the forest of Fontainebleau, finding there themes for landscape or for parts of their pictures. And they entertained for each other great admiration and liking and had admirations in common outside. The number of artists under that title uncertain. The United States has a large proportion of their work, and appreciated them early.*

*The romantic, the emotional, and the realistic tendencies met formalisation in art and were forced into apparent opposition. Certain names mark this beginning: Delacroix, Géricault. They were no innovators. Impression of their early work on the public. "The Wounded Cuirassier." "The Raft of the Medusa." Delacroix's exotism, the breath of that moment. "The Massacre of Scio." "The Women of Algiers." Subjects from foreign poetry and history. His extraordinary power of absorption of the idea.*

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OUR subject is Delacroix, the precursor of the so-called Barbizon school, which as you know is a misnomer, an accidental way of grouping a number of things together that have really not very much connection. The title, the name of the Barbizon, or the Fontainebleau school, is a mere expression of the fact that certain of the men whose names we associate with that title happened to live for a short time within the great and beautiful forest of Fontainebleau, and found therein sufficient themes for landscapes or for those parts of their pictures that needed a landscape motive. The exact number of these men whom we should bring together under that title is also an uncertain and a fluctuating matter. Probably I shall drop half of those who may fairly go in under the name. As you all know perhaps, the United States has a very large proportion of their work, to the credit of our country, which is supposed to be and is I suppose, and I hope will always consider itself, a barbaric country,

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because there is no greater protection than ambition for to-morrow. To our great credit we were also among the early admirers of this school which triumphed later in France. Millet was acknowledged here before he was really known over there, and Millet certainly met his first great encouragement through Americans. As I said, the exact number of these artists is a question of fluctuation. Their ideas, their temperaments, happen to be very diverse, and perhaps even in certain ways contradictory; their origin, that is to say the way they came to live at a certain moment under certain circumstances and certain influences, is not separable from the great movement of which they are the results, even when they contradict it. That great movement is a wave of the history of the world—the stormy settling of the waters after the French Revolution and the spread of its effects through the wars of Napoleon. The arts of peace, which had little free expression during the political and military spasms preceding the settlement of the Napoleonic wars, showed upon their revival the moral and intellectual effects of the storm already marked in social and political changes. New ideas had been accepted; old ones had faded away; and against the new ideas arose the natural reaction that accompanies revolutions. The desire for passionate self-expression,



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forced upon the mind by the openings of new gates of thought, brought up also a desire for peace, and reasonableness and ready adjustment. We must remember that in France the revolution, through its settling, through its formalisation by the influences about Napoleon, produced a more logical and consequently a less flexible, less human arrangement of society than had existed before. All was done rapidly, so as to meet the question of the necessary hurry. Innumerable things of beauty and goodness were put aside because they did not fit at once.

The story of this romantic and emotional and realistic school is associated with this difficulty. They met not a helping, but a tyrannical formalisation of art, meant for the good of a general public, but which to their independence was disastrous. Their forced opposition to the great school, the great government school, is the constant thread that unites all these men together.

In the arts which most reflect the aspirations of men, there came, beside the expression of passion, of doubt, of interest in all forms of movement, a special admiration of what is outside of man's agonies and anxieties—the peace and beauty and harmony of nature. The melancholy born of failure in fitting the issues of the world

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to one's own desires turns naturally into the contemplation of that over which we have no control—that nature which continues undisturbed by the vicissitudes of man. So that the protests of Shelley and of Byron coincide with the contemplation of Wordsworth and the detachment of Goethe; and in France the doubt of De Vigny, the agitation of Châteaubriand, merge into the melancholy of Lamartine, the questionings and poetic anxieties of De Musset, and the pictorial and exotic wordings of Victor Hugo, which belong to the same period as George Sand's description of pastoral regeneration.

In France more than anywhere else the art of painting showed the same rhythm of diverse tendencies. The official management of art had been established under Napoleon and continues to this day; but its steady reign began to be attacked as soon almost as the Napoleonic era closed. As often happens, the great leaders of the opposition had no desire to make a protest; they only asked to be let alone by the police of art. They were merely expressing themselves and their likings; likings the result of real surroundings, and not of academic influences; results also of another form of the past, that is to say, the past of the entire world, with which they were beginning to be familiar, and not the academic

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past, which was only a few years old, perhaps some fifty years old at most.

Some of these men had seen much outside. For a short time during the Napoleonic reign, during part of the Napoleonic triumph, they had the spoils of the world of art in Paris. They had very many of the great paintings; they had much we go to see now in different places all brought together. Englishmen, English artists came there to see them; our Allston was there and got the benefit of all that. Travellers were saved all delay and difficulties as well as expense, and a general idea of the past was brought to these Frenchmen at the time that the Academy was formalising something based only on a small section of the past. Our artists thus became revolutionary, under the influences of their many ancestors. What they were really protesting for was a regard for the men before them, whom we recognise and admire so much to-day, from Velasquez and Rembrandt to Watteau and Chardin. They were not trying to do anything new, they were simply trying to keep up the old tradition which has never ceased so far as we know, from the beginning, from the very beginning of painting, from anything done by the Egyptian, or before the Egyptian. And yet—so true is it that revolutionary may merely mean some form of change from what is

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an oppression—the famous Géricault, who left but a few fragments, began quite unintentionally to paint in a manner which involved great difficulties, consequently more emotion, so that the official school, being the government institution as it is to-day, felt the danger of everything not compassed by its own scholars. Almost every man seemed to have something to say against what might be the teaching or example of the official school, and that apparently without any special intention of opposition. Many of the names are of little importance to-day, but one or two remain that cannot be passed over, and they make a beginning of the men of whom I speak.

Foremost of these is Delacroix, around whose name, often to his annoyance, clustered much of the opposition to the narrowness of the government teaching, as well as the enthusiasm of all who had either something to say of art in any form or tried to think they had. With him begins the list of the men who so affected French art that no artist anywhere to-day has escaped the results of their individual efforts.

This moment of very great flowering of French art, coming as such flowerings do upon the peace after war, found England in a lulled condition; the only remnant of its ambitions in painting being Turner, who

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was trying to do something new after what he had already done; and a few very remarkable and most intelligent painters of society, purely of society, representing a narrow view of human nature—Thomas Lawrence, for instance, beautiful, but with no emotion, no danger, no difficulty, no great anxiety about the problems of mankind. Blake was unknown and dying. There was nothing in Italy, nothing in Holland. In Germany a movement was beginning which ended in a dramatic formulation on one side and a form of religiosity in art on the other. All that is absolutely in the past.

Delacroix is himself a difficult man to define, being as complex as the nineteenth century, whose middle period is covered by his life. Born, I think, in 1798, he died in 1864. The old Latin formula that man is double (*homo duplex*) is not only true enough, but man has even more varieties of himself than the adage gives him. We happen to know to-day quite well the interior mind of this painter of dramatic expression, who was, when he worked, carried away by emotion. We have his letters, his journals, or notes of thought and work, covering some forty years, and meant for himself alone. Therein he appears as a man of calm, judicial view, with a perception of subtle origins in art quite equal to those of any metaphysical analyst of his time. He judged his work

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when done with a severity tempered only by comparison with the work of others. Although he understood well that the methods of painting, or of any art, are not an end in themselves, he made studies of light and colour which began the series of modern attempts in that direction, and though an innovator to the public, he was a firm believer in all the great principles of the past, and an admirer of all classical beauty. But, like all the higher men, he tried to express what he wished to say in terms of himself and of his own temperament.

The difference between Delacroix, along with the artists of whom I shall speak, and the academic teachers, the government painters, the French Institute and the "Beaux-Arts," was that these newer men who were to affect the whole of modern art did not include the professors of the "Beaux-Arts" among the great masters of the past, while the professors of the "Beaux-Arts" and members of the Institute wished to be looked upon as the old masters themselves. The struggle is the same as that with all teaching bodies, and is merely one of the sad sides of human development. The story of such struggles is not different from the stories of the difficulties of the saints who are opposed by the official church and are thwarted and hindered until the day comes when they are put upon the altar.



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The story of these men is similar. They have not taught anything different from what has always been taught, but their special teaching was impossible to the average. It was simply this, "To thine own self be true," which law demands a personal existence and a personal value, that most of us are unwilling to disengage so long as we can use the opinions and the manners of others as being more acceptable for present success. What Delacroix and the men a little later than himself did was to kindle the flame, or keep it burning.

Delacroix had been a companion, and to some extent a fellow-student, of Géricault, who begins the life of modern French art, outside the strict lines of the Institute, at the date of 1820. Géricault was not unfavourably looked upon by many men who wrote about art at that time. They felt in the great work of Géricault a certain connection, and also it must be told, a certain theatrical tendency, a certain malice prepense, in thinking of his subject beforehand, which connected with the teaching of the school.

The two young men—for Delacroix was then twenty-two years old—in 1820), belonged to the higher classes of society and dropped into the practice of art from the liking of the amateur. Delacroix was attracted to art

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through the paintings of the maturer Géricault. Géricault was for a time in the Royal Body Guard, and was always fond of the accomplishments and pleasures that a young man is sure to indulge in when he keeps a certain amount of social relation. He was very fond of horses, and he helped Delacroix to have a similar turn that way. He also, and it is quite a mark of what the nineteenth century took upon itself immediately after the Revolution, he also was fond of England and Englishmen. Both of these young men went over to England. They were, like a good many Frenchmen, exceedingly anxious to see what this England really was against which they had been struggling for some twenty years. Already a beginning of romance and individualism was associated with the name of this first precursor of the Romantic school, so called. In 1812, the youngster, only twenty years old, had attracted and slightly shocked and had also pleased by his first painting—the famous, astonishing, and singular picture, known as the “Portrait of Mr. M.,” which represents an officer of the Imperial Guards on horseback, supposed to be charging. This astonishing work,—whether as we see it to-day in the Louvre it bears out fully its curious renown,—is still to be marked as the first call of a new era. There is, of course, a something theatrical



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in the canvas, but not in the sense of a possibly fixed image. There was in the young man himself a certain fondness for show—a certain ambition of display, with the ease of success which comes from youth and fortune, social position, acquaintance with the elect of fashion, and, in this case, a liking for the pretty side of military life as he saw it among his friends. All that is in the picture, and only a young man in the first flush of life could have invented and painted it. We have seen so much, the nineteenth century has worked so hard at the comprehension and the rendering of Nature, the photograph has so acquainted us with innumerable facts and variations, which our stupidity had never perceived, that the once extreme novelty of this painting leaves us to-day somewhat uncertain. Imitations, suggestions from it have gone on. We do not recognise its birth in love of Nature. But it is really the result of having a personal acquaintance with the horse, of being a rider, and of a distaste for the polite representation of the animal by the artists whom the painter knew. He was studying at the time anything relating to the horse, and all in the vein of amusement and pleasure. The accident of seeing a horse rearing, in a cloud of dust, at some suburban fair, is translated by the imagination of the youngster into a horse, charging and pulled up

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suddenly. From this the youth of twenty created the picture. It is the picture of a horse, and the rider is merely the necessary accompaniment. The fact that a friend was willing to pose for the head, for the costume, is simply thrown in to give assurance of some additional facts. Seen in this way, we realise the new departure, and the reason of that suddenness of impression which is essential to the greater work of art.

In his next picture, the "Wounded Cuirassier Leaving the Field of Battle," we have again the love and use of the horse as the motive. But now a sentimentality, an intention of lyric meaning fills the picture, determines its lines, and the arrangement of its masses. It is not an echo, but it has the note of the Byronic feeling coeval with it. The officer is now an intimate part of the story—perhaps the story itself, and Géricault has entered the Guards and is wearing the uniform of the musketeers. And then he goes back to study, and Italy makes more and more a sculptor of him. Italy also frees his mind through admiration of every kind. For he is, like Delacroix, an *admirer*; he is not an imitator. All that he asks from the various contradictory admirations is the excitement and additional life that we gain through admiration. His personal influence may not have been perhaps as great at it seems to us to-day,

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but he opposed very strongly the official school, and all the more after his having seen in Rome the results of the academic form of teaching. He was opposed to all government interference in art, and to all strict educational prisons. The school then was more dogmatic than we can quite understand to-day. One of the criticisms of Géricault's principal painting was that it did not quite seem to be "within the limits of *our* school." We must remember that the great M. Ingres, whom my youth and yours also, perhaps, considered a severe master, was once looked upon as a person whose views might be a little bit doubtful, because of a suspicion of independence.

Some of Géricault's actual words are worth quoting. One day, seeing a child scribbling something on a wall, he was astonished at the boldness of the drawing, and said: "What a pity! The school is going to spoil all that." He goes on to say: "Suppose, indeed, that all young men in the school are endowed with all the qualities that make painters; isn't it dangerous to have all study together for years and years, under the same influence, copying the same thing and travelling, you may say, on one road? How can they have any originality after that? Haven't they exchanged with each other any particular qualities which they had? So it is

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disgusting every year to see the compositions of these young men, all painted quite correctly from end to end, and yet having nothing of their own. That is because having long put aside their own sensations, none of these rivals is able to have a physiognomy of his own; one drawing, one colour, one system of drapery, one set of gestures, one set of expressions—all that is the sad result of the school, comely in the same way, inspired by the same soul—if, indeed, one can admit that the soul can still preserve any faculty and preside over such work.”

That is, in short, what Géricault taught, and, to a certain extent, practised in his painting. But he was not, in the slightest way, revolutionary or loose-ended. He was a hard and severe student upon the old lines, and his last and great work shows what previous studies he must have made in the direction of a severe view of Nature. Yet there is something of an appeal to the public—an appeal which is still understood, for his picture, either in its original paint or translated by engraving or photograph, has still a popularity. That, it could hardly escape, if fairly well done, for the subject is such a one as appeals to all our memories and sensations—the story of castaways in the middle of a threatening ocean, on an insufficient raft, discovering at

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length a sail which may be their salvation. The "Raft of the Medusa" is, therefore, a great historical painting, in the sense that, besides its popular success, it has great professional qualities of respect, and study of the scholarly and classical, and an extraordinary reaching out to the strongest realism. Whatever might have happened to this remarkable young man, the most that we know is that he made this brilliant mark, and influenced more or less many about him. The very brevity of his life—cut off by accident—has helped to make of him all the more, a special figure. (He was thrown off his horse, a fate quite in accordance with his passion for everything concerning the horse.)

Considering this influence, and both the friendship or friendly acquaintance between Géricault and Delacroix, it is worth while comparing their first successes—if, indeed, we can use these words for a success cut short like that of Géricault's. The first painting of Delacroix's, "The Barque of Dante," still has a certain preoccupation or anxiety for a rendering which shall be in accordance with "Beaux-Arts" tradition. The figures are studied, as it were, separately, with some anxiety. Of course, the extraordinary imagination of the painter has seen the thing altogether, while in the great painting of Géricault one feels that its existence

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has been slowly evolved out of many possible combinations. It is only very slowly—this we know—that Géricault placed on the empty barrel in the raft the figure, the naked negro, who waves his signal for relief. When Delacroix comes to paint his next great picture, “The Massacre at Scio,” his mind is absolutely free from the wish to hark back to some rule—in fact, to paint a picture. He sees the thing in his mind as we do in Nature.

So that the step between these two men is really very wide. But they must have helped each other, especially in their having together visited England, and admired the paintings, both of the day itself, which was not a great one, and of the men who were just gone, the Reynoldses and Gainsboroughs, and others.

Reverses of fortune obliged Delacroix to take to painting as a means of support. His father had been secretary to the Prime Minister Turgot in the previous century; a lawyer in Parliament; a deputy to the Convention; a member of the Council of State, as in the usual way of parliamentary men of that day; then a Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Ambassador. A certain disfavour towards a name associated with revolutionary antecedents may, later, have helped somewhat an opposition to the son, our artist. His mother was



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a daughter of the celebrated maker of furniture, Oeben, and through him, from that line, Delacroix perhaps inherited a certain Teutonic something. He was otherwise well connected, and this influenced his life for good and bad; I mean that this insured his easy relation with people who were in the foremost ranks of political and social life. Educated in a manner suitable to his prospects, he retained throughout his life a love for literary culture. This marks his choice of subjects and helps to explain the familiar ease with which he moves in his representations of historical and literary characters. He had learned some English early, so that Shakespeare and Byron were familiar influences. In this way he came to know something of England, which he visited, as you know, and he became familiar at an early date with English art, which he admired. He cared for all its best examples, even to the later day of the Pre-Raphaelites. These he was the first by half a century to praise before an unbelieving Continental audience. A certain liking for many English institutions remained with him, and perhaps influenced his political and social ideas, which remained opposed to the loose democratic movement of France. His father and his father's family had moved in diplomacy and public life. They were inside the influences that moved their world, and he



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must have seen what was going on, must have seen back of the scenery of the theatre. Not, however, that his ideas were retrograde. He represented, as I think I fairly said, what might come to a man who, having a great deal of strong, good sense, knowing the misfortunes of his country, its excessive anxiety to settle everything, had heard reasonable views expressed to him by men of affairs who knew and who saw. Then his connection with England had made him appreciate the English manner that managed to get along and to get a great many things without general theories of guidance. Delacroix was fond of music and retained its love through life, and it was this slight matter which determined, as we may see later, his admission into the Institute, at a time when painters and sculptors in the government positions were all against him. He had thought of entering the army, in which were most of his family, his brother being a general.

He was helped in his first beginnings by Géricault, who found living work for him; and almost at once, in 1822, his first great picture of "Dante and Virgil Crossing the Infernal Lake" drew the attention of the public, of critics, of people of fashion, of all the literary men, to the promise of extraordinary talent. The success was almost too great, and opinions divided. Great

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praise was met by objections which seem to us to-day a condemnation of the critics who opposed. He was especially blamed for the greatest of all qualities that can be found in any work of art; to quote the exact words of the most important authority who arraigned him: "He had combined all the parts of his work in view of one emotion." This phrase is perhaps the best definition of what any judicious mind would choose for an explanation of the superior work of art. It may be said, in fact, that this is all there is in any very great work of art. But it was not what the school taught, and what, unfortunately, schools are unable to teach, in so far as they are merely trainings in the grammar of the profession. Into those questions, the questions of grammar and of mechanical execution, these greater questions can only come in by chance. And also the weak have to be encouraged even at the expense of the strong, and the supply of teachers must remain limited.

The famous painter of that day, Gros, wished to take Delacroix with him, but the young man declined the honourable offer, notwithstanding his admiration for the older painter. He needed the practical help, however, very much. He was very poor, as people are poor who step down from manners of living which have no relation to self-help. From economy he lodged in one

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room, with one of the Fieldings, the English painter (who taught him the English methods of water colour), both living on rather insufficient food. For instance, they saved up their coffee-grounds to make their coffee on the following days, and kept a piece of meat from which they cut small slices to be roasted in the chimney fire-place. Delacroix was already suffering from a form of illness that persisted through life—an ague—which at times cut him off absolutely from work. He therefore needed great courage to stand by himself, and was obliged to take any small work which might keep him afloat, even to caricature. It was possible to sell studies of horses, and these days of adversity brought him to attempt representations of the horse which antedate by half a century the modern perception of the stages of motion, which we owe to the photograph. That which to-day is a proof of his perception of nature remained against him for many years, because the average eye was accustomed to see the horse represented according to academic teaching. Another form of the insuccess attending merit is the fact that he was unable to obtain the prize he steadily competed for in the School of Fine Arts. *At the very moment when he exhibited "Dante and Virgil," one of the famous paintings of the world, he was the last in the competition, obtaining*

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only the number 60. But this is the continuous story of the Roman prize, which, though excellent in its meaning, has usually merely provided a place for a favourite pupil. Later we shall see the great Millet told by his teacher, Delaroche, that he deserved the prize but that Delaroche wanted it for another pupil, a man whom we only know through this.

Under these circumstances Delacroix's next great painting, "The Massacre of Scio," was produced and exhibited. The subject of the famous painting was one of that moment, a record of the effect of the news from Greece. This is the date of Lord Byron and of the struggle of Greece for freedom, that moved the entire civilised world. The painting is a lyric, or a Byronic poem, and however accurate in many exotic details, and in its probability, was frankly meant as an ideal drama. In this and later we shall see the extraordinary perception of Delacroix in rendering exotic picturesqueness, in which he is the earliest, and perhaps the most successful of modern artists.

One must remember that this is a first attempt at rendering the appearance of the Oriental man, and we can see how even to-day that appearance is real and living in his work. Yet there was no intention of making a quite correct record; merely the necessity of cloth-

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ing the subject in dress sufficiently near to probability; sufficiently real to appeal to the current enthusiasm for the independence of Greece. An enthusiasm felt here also as our literature tells us. The Western Christian world had been stirred to its depths by stories of the cruelties of the Turks in their repression of the Greek attempt at independence. This sympathy is part of the poetic life of England, as we know, and in France also, had a similar echo. There was a spirit of opposition to government latent, and perhaps our painter may have been marked as meaning such opposition by his picture. For both France and England were forced into helping Greece by accident. The public were favourable to the cause. The great painting then was a manner of appeal which to-day would be too slow with all our changes of time and space. But then there was time enough to prepare either in words or in painting something that might be still within the news from Greece. The exact story of the massacres I have not looked up.

The accurate title of Delacroix's great painting is "An Episode of the Massacres of Scio." The title makes a careful difference, and is worth remembering as marking the special point in this extremely important painting. However admired, however famous, it has never received the full appreciation that it deserves, nor

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are its lessons yet comprehended even in the country which has held it so long, in its most important collection. However well balanced, however carefully composed as line, however much of a unity, the painting asserts itself as part only of a scene which we do not see entirely. We know that outside of this frame, outside this opening, more is going on of the same kind. We are only looking at a small fragment, a small centre of murder and brutality. The little group of wounded men and horrified women is evidently circled by a band of Arnauts, of whom we only see a few, who stalk or gallop around them, taking their choice of victims for murder or for rape. And the mind of the artist recognises quite well the merely official, commonplace cruelty of the Turkish victors. They are merely doing their ordinary business. On the contrary, the victims give us, beyond any representation that I have ever seen the terrible story of the varieties of agony endured by the vanquished. The soldier calmly waiting his turn, whose children alongside of him, embrace him and each other in fright; the dying man resigned to fate, dreamily expectant, his wife's head on his shoulder; the dying woman whose child hopelessly pulls at her breast; the mother attempting to save her daughter from the Turk who drags her away at the tail of his horse; the other



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women awaiting in abandoned sorrow their horrible fate—all these things were new in the history of art, and have never been equalled in their dramatic intensity, in the carefulness of the probabilities of each detail. All that is for the poetic thought, the historical appreciation, and the dramatic terror of the story.

For us, who are students of the art of painting, which has strict technical laws and variations of means, we can see how part of this marvel of representation is obtained by the form of the composition. It is a reversal of the usual baby-form of making an official picture, which was especially taught then, and which has not disappeared from the usual school. The centre of the picture is empty. Our eyes take up the incidents on each side, so that we naturally feel that the story, the facts, are spread out further than the centre, continuing indefinitely around it, as they do in Nature, which is *not* enclosed, by a frame of perpendicular and horizontal, either gilded or not gilded. The vast plain and its details far away, of people, and villages, and hills, and the sea, give us all the more the sense of the helplessness of the little crowd gathered in this spot.

Of course, there are wonderful bits of painting in the picture, and the whole of it is a great piece of colour, and drawing, and motion. And it is worth noticing that



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we have the record of the number of hours, and they are few, which were given to the painting of some of these figures; notably, the half-naked woman on the right dragged away by the Turkish horseman. The studies, on the contrary, were many and long. There are exquisite arrangements of line, and beauties of the *melody* of painting which you can see for yourselves. Notice, for instance, the extraordinary arrangement of line which brings within the curve of the Turkish scimeter the agonised body and clutching arms of the poor mother, trying to save her daughter. With some of the greater painters—Rembrandt, and Titian, and Rubens, and with Delacroix, we do not recognise at once the beautiful pattern and careful disposition of space and line, because all that is covered by the splendour of colour, and modelling, and realisation of Nature, which makes the difference between a painter and a designer of patterns.<sup>1</sup>

In this picture, then, we have the beginning of free-

<sup>1</sup> For some of you who are more especially students, it would be worth while to look up some of the publications of the beginning of the last century, which gave reproductions of pictures in outline. For the purposes of education in the way of appreciation of composition and decorative line, this, of course, is the simplest of methods. You will be surprised at seeing the qualities I have just mentioned, in Rubens or Titian, in a manner quite free and apart from the other merits which we all feel so strongly.

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dom in our art, in a manner quite opposite to the school, and so subtly placed before us that only the natural enmity to nature entertained by academic training could hesitate in its recognition.

The great painting was at once admired and disliked. It was, however, bought by the government, which shows that there was still a recognition. But many of the important painters were frightened and disconcerted, and with this painting begins the long career of opposition through which our great painter had to struggle, and which has deprived France and the world of what would have been the greatest of all modern painting. This went so far that Delacroix was officially notified, three years later, when he next exhibited the three paintings known as the "Death of Sardanapalus," "Christ in the Garden," and "Marino Faliero," that no further encouragement from official sources would come to him.

The name of Byron is connected with much choice of subjects by Delacroix. He returned over and over again to dramatic incidents from Byron's poems, as well as to stories from Shakespeare, from Dante, from Goethe, all of which seems now to us English-speaking people, quite naturally selected. To his own public, however, they were more or less unknown. Thus he did not have the enormous advantage which is held by the choice

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of a well-known motive. Perhaps he was not quite aware of his subjects being so remote from ordinary acquaintance. He lived in these poems and stories of poets who were little known and unsympathetic to his French audience. Nor was it prepared, nor is it prepared to-day, for the essential difference between the representation of the story by painting as it was with Delacroix and by the theatre. It is impossible to think of these paintings as represented by any stage arrangement. Theirs is no arrangement in which one can take out a part and put in another, and yet have an arrangement quite as good or better than it was before. This fact of the French not feeling the difference between the representation of the story by painting, or by the theatre, explains the opposition met by Delacroix and later by Millet.

As I told you yesterday, Millet for a long time could not go to the theatre after seeing the paintings of the old masters, and after seeing Delacroix's especial form of representation of reality the theatre became more and more distasteful to him. This influence of the theatre accounts for a great deal of the annoying posing of French art. When accustomed to see arrangements that are purely theatrical, the average mind is disturbed by the sight of a scene as it might really have happened,

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and begins to wish for anything that will give assurance that the story is taken from art and not from nature. The mind distorted by convention cannot believe the thing to be art which looks accidental. The habit of the theatre, as distinguished from drama in life or in painting, admits the declamation and posing and all the varieties of untruth which fit the arrangement of the stage; and this is fair enough as far as the necessities of the theatre are considered. The effect of the theatre fades away; there is a succession of movements whose false poses are not recorded once and forever, as they are in painting. The theatrical declamation and voice become a memory. How many of us remember the actors of our youth, the great actors and actresses? I have been able to tell something about great actors and actresses to other great ones who had only heard of them, but what could this carry of the originals? Painting of course keeps a record, and therefore should be true to sight for another reason: because any falsity will tell more and more as time goes on. If the declamation of the theatre hung in our ears we should get tired.

It is this special limit that Delacroix, or Rembrandt, or Millet, or any of the great dramatic masters, never passed. And it is the extreme persistence of the theatre notion that assures the unreliability of almost all French

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art in representing stories from literature or from the past, and which even affects and vitiates such careful exotic representations as those of so careful an artist as Gérôme, for instance. But the convenience of the other view is great by allowing the accuracy of a few details to be studied out, as on the real stage—to the detriment of the greater qualities, it is true, but to the satisfaction of the unimaginative man who can exercise his talent on the special points of which he has control. Compared to the set scenes of French painters of that day, Delacroix's dramas seemed to have too much life and not to allow the eye to fasten on each detail in succession. The partisans of the official school arrangements of a subject, planned according to precedent, remained enemies of our master to the day of his death; and it was only by persistent struggle, by the intense admiration of a few, that Delacroix was even allowed to exhibit in the various "Salons" of successive years that long series of glorious works which have placed him alone of all the painters of the nineteenth century in the same line of high expression which runs from Giotto to Puvis de Chavannes.

Divided praise and blame therefore followed Delacroix from the moment of his first picture until his death in 1864. He made a large number of paintings and

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drawings, having been all his life a great worker. Indeed, he found in work itself, in the problems which he was obliged to solve — because his aim had been the representation of any subject that interested him — his one recourse against the pressure of an outside world whose form was in many cases disagreeable to him, and for which he had a most aristocratic contempt; not the contempt of the snob for those under him, but aristocratic contempt for meanness, vulgarity, all the lower forms of man, visible in one form of society as well as in another. Somewhat a man of the world, to appearances, at least, insomuch that he kept carefully all his social relations, the notes of his journal, made only for himself, explain that he thoroughly understood the meanness of the crowd, the machinations of envy, and asked for nothing more than the consolation of faithful friendship and the privilege of carrying out projects which were always increasing in his imagination.

Out of his complete catalogue of works of nine thousand one hundred and forty pieces there are eight hundred and fifty paintings. When urged in his later days to desist from work, he answered: "I have already prepared in composition, ready to be carried out, enough for two lives, and as for projects sketched out,





GÉRICAULT  
‘AN OFFICER OF THE IMPERIAL GUARD’  
(PORTRAIT OF MS. M.) THE LOUVRE







GÉRICAULT  
"THE WOUNDED CUIRASSIER"  
THE LOUVRE





GÉRICAUT: "THE RAFT OF 'LA MÉDUSE'"

THE LOUVRE





DELACROIX

“EPISODE OF THE MASSACRES OF SCIO”

THE LOUVRE



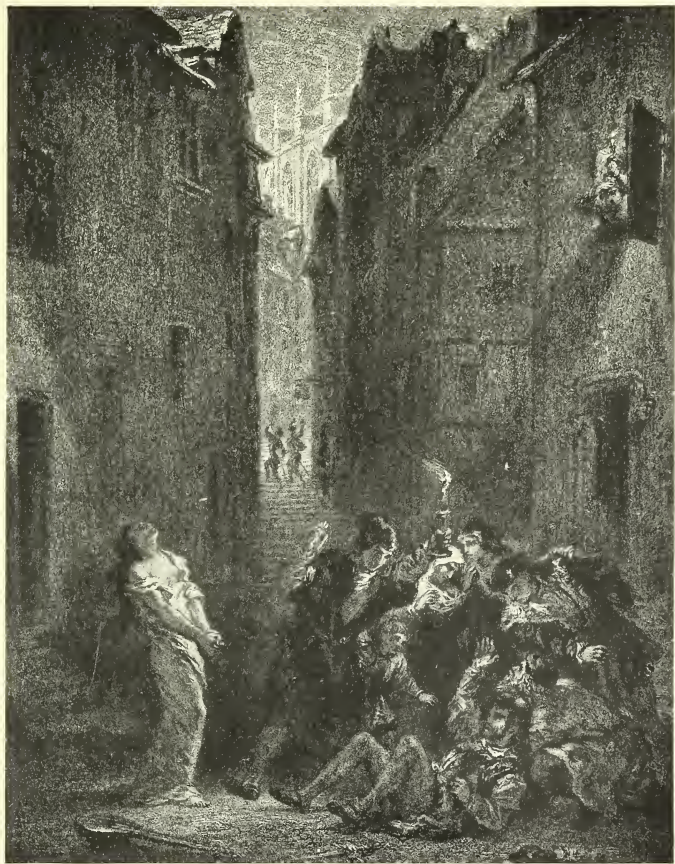




DELACROIX  
ENTRANCE OF  
THE CRUSADERS  
INTO CON-  
STANTINOPLE

THE LOUVRE





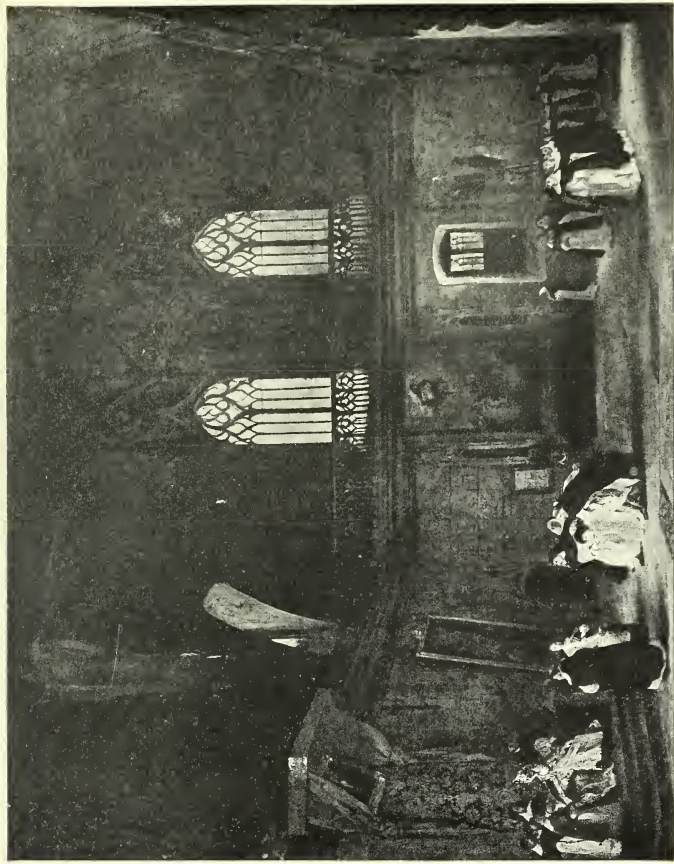
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FROM LITHOGRAPH BY A. MOUILLON



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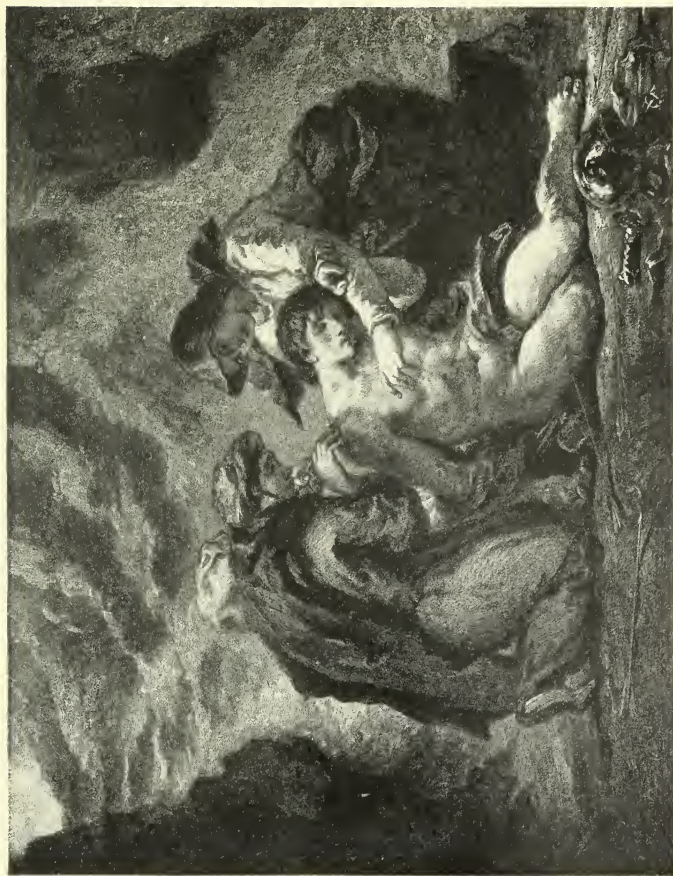


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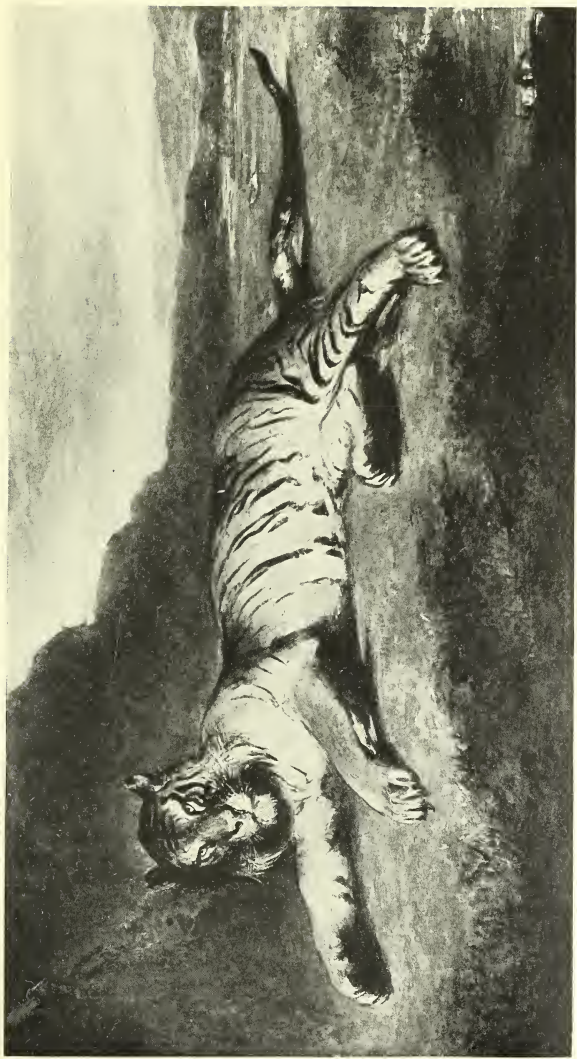
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"ALGERIAN  
WOMEN  
AT HOME"



THE LOUVRE







DELACROIX: "TIGRE COUCHÉ"  
NOW IN THE COLLECTION OF JAMES J. HILL





DELACROIX: "HELIODORUS CAST OUT OF THE TEMPLE"

CHURCH OF ST. SULPICE, PARIS

(FROM THE ETCHING BY GREUX)





DELACROIX

"JACOB WRESTLING WITH THE ANGEL"

CHURCH OF ST. SULPICE, PARIS







DELACROIX

"TOBIAS AND THE ANGEL"

CHURCH OF ST. SULPICE, PARIS





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I think I have enough for four hundred years' work." Nor could he have been exaggerating, for his special mark is the novelty and suddenness of the appearance of his conceptions. That one effort of all great men, to have a novel view, the effort which justifies their right to speak, seems as easy to him as ordinary speech. This novelty and intensity of perception was such that the great Goethe said, on seeing Delacroix's illustrations to his own (Goethe's) "Faust," "Delacroix has surpassed the pictures that I made to myself of the scenes that I wrote myself." And he added: "The French reproach him with having too wild a rudeness, but there it is most certainly in its place." The French to-day have hardly forgiven him yet for the harshness of his rendering of harsh subjects, and no one could have been more opposed by temperament and turn of mind to the commonplace moment in which his lot was cast.

Once he escaped from it by an accident which determined a great part of his career, which gave him new and splendid motives, and showed him glories of light and colour unknown to his colder and darker native land. In 1832, ten years after his public beginning, he made a trip into Morocco with an embassy and brought back the studies for some of his famous works; among them the "Algerian Women at Home," the "Jewish

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Marriage," the "Mad Dervishes of Tangiers," the "Guard of the Sultan," and many, many others.

They are the first competent representations of that Oriental life which lies along the Mediterranean, and they would answer for most Mahometan countries. Some of them have separate qualities, astonishingly different from his other and previous work.

It is needless to say that all through the paintings and studies passes a current of poetic appreciation sufficient to ennoble any subject. But what is extraordinary is the passage from one form of realisation to another. In this he is the first of the men of the nineteenth century, and he has begun for all of us the appreciation of different manners of painting according to the subject. In this particular meaning are intended the accurate view of the differences of place, which we feel in such a painting as his "Algerian Women in their Room." The sense of closed space, the warm light, indicative of a captive sunshine, are as beautifully observed as in the intimacy of any of the Dutch painters of interiors. Contrariwise the open air—what may be called the weight of the sunlight upon burnous and haick of Moorish warriors are again impressions of open space, and of light and air.

And here again you will notice the look of momentary

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poise in each figure—the laziness of the sitting ones, the movement of *entrance* of the one who lifts the curtain as she comes in—all so different from the set photographic studio stability we get even from good artists. I say photographic, but each day of improvement in the art of photography brings us nearer to a photographic rendering of the *reality* which is movement.

All through his life he returned at times to these reminiscences that carried him to a land where he had seen the external expression of man in harmony with man's habits and surroundings. Consequently he felt that his ideas of art were fundamental. That, for instance, in this harmony of man with nature was the real clue to the value of our inheritance of the antique Greek style. As with Rodin, who is a great example, as with Barye, Delacroix's friend, as with the Greeks, as with the greater men of all time, except the present, so Delacroix felt the unexpressed rule that the human being never moves free in *space*, but always, being an animal, in relation to the place where he is, to the people around him, to innumerable influences of light, and air, wind, footing, and the possibility of touching others. This is the absolute contradiction of the studio painting, however dignified, where the figure is free from any interruption, and nobody will run against it. And the habit

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of the studio has so acted on modern art that the greater mass of even extraordinary successes are pictures of pictures, and not pictures of Nature.

Please consider this the point that I am making for you. Were Mr. Rodin, the sculptor, here he would tell you how we talked this secret over some dozen years or so ago—a secret which he was glad to find I had discovered as a principle of his work.

Delacroix thus saw more and more the meaning of the rhythm of movement, and he was also encouraged to go more deeply into the great questions of colour and light which were neglected by the men of his time. From that moment these questions remained with him a constant preoccupation in everything that he did, and so his more successful work separates from the usual French tone by a certain richness of appearance.<sup>1</sup>

A certain superiority was conceded to Delacroix by his contemporaries, even when inimical to him, in those questions of colour and of light. But with the usual jealousy of any great superiority they assumed that

<sup>1</sup>It is a pity that because he, like others of the nineteenth century, had no good practical connection with the past, and because the pigments of that moment were uncertain and sophisticated by chemists, and because he was poor, many of his paintings, in common with those of the day, have been injured by the changes of time. No men have suffered more than the majority of the Barbizon men from the manner in which their paintings have changed.

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he must have been deficient in everything else. Opposition to him increased, preventing his obtaining orders for decorative work, for which the qualities that his enemies conceded were eminently fitting.

We have, therefore, but little of him in that direction. With Puvis de Chavannes he is the only one of the French painters who has any claim to connection with the great mural painters of the past. It is to the eternal disgrace of the government and official influence that Delacroix, this one most important exemplar of decorative art, had so little opportunity to illustrate his nation by monumental work.

He was compelled to execute work at a loss to himself. The personal fortune of Puvis de Chavannes allowed him to accept commissions at a loss. But for all the gigantic work of Delacroix, who lived a somewhat abstemious life, spending on nothing but his work, and leaving a fortune in *paintings*, he had not at his death more than a few thousand dollars.

The great pieces of decorative work merely gave him enough to go on with. One of them especially is the ceiling in the so-called Gallery of Apollo in the Louvre, where form and colour fully carry out the rich old architectural forms. There the Greek myth, "The Triumph of the God of Day over the Powers of Darkness,"

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is represented as freshly as if the subject had just stepped out of the brain of Minerva. In no ancient, in no modern work, is there a greater swing than in the charge of the divine horses, carrying Apollo who aims his bow, while his sister supplies him with the deadly arrows. In the paintings in the church of Saint Sulpice two great wall spaces of rather gray surface—showing as well as anything by Puvis de Chavannes the careful treatment of the wall—represent the wrestling of Jacob with the angel, and the driving of Heliodorus from the temple by the angelic avengers. In the former, the impression of a pastoral scene, of the interruption of travel in a great wooded country; in the second, the fierce descent of two angelic powers hurled through the air at the pagan desecration, are the subjects.

These are late works, and at that very time especially was Delacroix most attacked, and yet the critics who liked him little were not afraid to compare his work with Raphael's on the same subject. And it gives one the measure of the importance of this man that the comparison is necessary, that it can be made with no one else, and that in some ways he animates the main figures with a larger feeling. That alone, in fact, ranks Delacroix beyond all modern men in the great question of style and the grasp of the meaning of a subject.



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In truth he was a stupendous composer. Studied as mere arrangement of lines his pictures are valuable lessons, but this fundamental quality is covered up, as in the works of Rubens, by so much drama and external movement that one does not discover easily the laws by which no great work lives in plastic art that has not those qualities at bottom; the same qualities which make all decorative work, that are all questions of proportion, all questions of balance. Perhaps this very point annoyed his opponents, even his slighter works being so much more serious than they appeared to be. But the admirers of Delacroix were all men of great and persistent importance. He appealed to the feelings of the poets and of the younger artists, and the Institute was obliged at length to accept him; yet, to the disgrace of the official architects and painters of France, he would not have been elected had it not been for the votes of the musicians, who recognised in him a lover of that branch of art. For Delacroix the place seemed important because it gave him a fixed position before the public, always ready to accept any one belonging to organised institutions. He was a prudent man and refused no honourable chance of continuing to exercise what was to him a real call. He was also a very generous man to his rivals and on certain occasions even

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took up the cause of his most implacable enemies, men who hated him beyond expression. In all he was a right-minded gentleman, with a profound contempt for meanness. We have the accidental record of his life through his habit of noting for many years the small events of his day, his methods of work, and his artistic opinions. They are all to his infinite credit; indeed, we might be sure beforehand that such would be the case from the nobility of his work and its detachment from the pursuit of public favour. But there is a significant side, as I noted before, to his explanation of his artistic views, that is, their conservatism and love of the past, and the assertion of the very principles which his enemies imagined he contradicted by his work. However, as Millet remarked, "They have passed and he remains. Their voices disappeared hurled as against a monument." His life, which had always been endangered by illness, came to an end in 1864. He slowly passed away, receiving the visit of the members of the Institute on his deathbed, and saying when they left: "Haven't they already bored me enough?"

In his long and carefully devised will, dictated a few hours before his death, the last words typify his loves and hatreds. He asks for neither emblem nor inscription on his tomb, which was to be copied from "classic

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forms with firm masculine mouldings," "contrary," he says, "to all that is now done in architecture."

At the time of his death there were still living men whom he had influenced, as in fact he influenced all who were out of the Academic School: Barye, the sculptor, whose work resembles his closely, for Delacroix was a great lover of animals and has left very many drawings of the great wild beasts, the subjects also of Barye's genius; Decamps was dead, who belonged more to his own time; Corot, Rousseau, Diaz, Millet, were in the full springtide of their great careers. Most of the ideas that he believed in, they worked in also, but in other ways, as he himself thought right. They too, were fond of all art, and they objected to the narrowness of Parisian teaching, and were also more or less persecuted by the representatives of official art.

I do not dare to take up Millet in this lecture, but I hope to do so in the next lecture and to connect him with Delacroix. We must bear this in mind, that they are extremely different in the quality of mind, in their origin, in their social ideas. Millet, accused of socialism because of his general ideas, which in reality are as far back as the middle ages; Delacroix, having the feeling of the Englishman of rank, perfectly willing to have liberty and everything of the kind, everything for the best

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private order that goes along with it ; each of these men living in differing parts of society and continuing in differing parts of society, knowing each other only by their works. Therefore I can take them up in this way separately and perhaps without injuring the connection.

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*The story of J. F. Millet is a vision of emotional art, and balances the record of Delacroix, with whom we began. The admiration of Millet for Delacroix so different from him. Corot's astonishment at Delacroix's mysterious power which "frightened" him. The "Amende Honorable" (now in Philadelphia) cited.*

*Millet saw in Delacroix the proper dramatic expression belonging to the art of painting. The theatrical opposite in French art, especially modern, "gave him a distaste for the theatre itself." The source of dramatic expression, however, in Delacroix is lyrical. Compare Heine. Origins of Millet in Norman France. His family; his grandmother. The Bible and Virgil. His antecedents and origins are really the subject of his pictures. In this he separates from other painters. Therefore his personal story is important. He learns as he best can. He comes to Paris to study, also to work. He marries. His wife's death sends him back to the home life of peasantry. He marries again: returns to Paris. Paints variously. Is suddenly converted to abandon his methods and subjects and to take up the life at Fontainebleau which he has illustrated by his drawings and paintings. His connection with the ancient past of France as expressed in the middle ages. Ideals of life, spiritual and moral, little known to us here.*

### THIRD LECTURE

**I** HAVE chosen to continue with the story of Jean François Millet because of his bringing a vision of emotional art fit to balance the record of Delacroix with whom I began.

Delacroix was Millet's first and only admiration among modern painters, notwithstanding their very opposite points of view, their extremely opposite training and education, their social views, and a distinct antithesis, or opposite of character. You can see that if I can fall back on the admiration of such a man, I cannot have exaggerated what I told you yesterday. I cannot have exaggerated "Father " Corot's statement, that the other man (Delacroix) was an eagle, and he himself was but the small bird twittering in the clouds; or his astonishment at Delacroix's painting, which we now have here, the "Amende Honorable." In a way it is impossible to analyse. He has given the type of the Gothic interior building. It is taken from an original, but it resembles it in no way. It is, as it were, a type of all



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Gothic buildings of the late period. It was this which amazed Corot, who said, "What a terrible man he is." For Delacroix had passed beyond the limit even of Corot's long experience in the methods by which a man, when he does a work of art, gives a *type*, not a mere representation of a single fact, but a representation of all the facts that have happened or may happen.

Now these two men, Delacroix and Millet, extremely different in their natures, who used the most divergent technique, in many cases could not be more apart. But it is one of the characteristics of this group of men (whom we misname the Barbizon, or Fontainebleau, men), that their scheme of ideas could be different, and yet that they could recognise a common bond of union. In the work of Delacroix Millet could see the proper dramatic expression belonging to the art of painting, while the expression of most of the painters of the time was to him based on the art and methods of the theatre. That, you will remember, we spoke of yesterday. As he, Millet, once wrote: "The paintings of the Luxembourg Gallery" (the gallery of modern French art), "have given me a distaste for the theatre itself." But the dramatic expression of Delacroix has another basis than Millet's. It is *lyrical*; it is an expression of personal mood, of desire, of sentiment, perhaps only momentary,

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and the story or image depicted is the method of implying this. Let us take an example of this attitude in poetry, and remember Heine's "King Richard Cœur-de-Lion":

Wohl durch der Wälder einödige Pracht  
Jagt ungestüm ein Reiter;  
Er bläst ins Horn, er singt und lacht  
Gar seelenvergnügt und heiter.

Sein Harnisch ist von starkem Erz,  
Noch stärker ist sein Gemüte,  
Das ist Herr Richard Löwenherz,  
Der christlichen Ritterschaft Blüte.

Willkommen in England! rufen ihm zu  
Die Bäume mit grünen Zungen—  
Wir freuen uns, o König, dass du  
Oestreichischer Haft entsprungen.

Dem König ist wohl in der freien Luft,  
Er fühlt sich wie neugeboren,  
Er denkt an Oestreichs Festungsduft—  
Und gibt seinem Pferde die Sporen.<sup>1</sup>

In poor English it is this way:

Right through the forest's solitary pride  
Chases undisturbed a knight;  
He blows his horn, he sings and he laughs,  
Full joyful in heart and happy.

His harness is of iron hard,  
But harder still is his temper,  
He is Lord Richard of the Lion Heart,  
The bloom of Christian knighthood.

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Now here we have the same thing as Delacroix's painting. Like King Richard, Heine has also escaped from the oppressions and dangers of German captivity, and still quivering with joy in the air of a free country, occasionally he spurs his horse, remembering the cruel past. So naturally flow from him the lovely lines which tell of the English king, back from his German prison, galloping again through the woods of England. The trees call to him a welcome, he sits his saddle in joy, as if new-born, and oh! the thought of the past tyranny makes him give his steed the spurs. It is a picture of the king, "the bloom of Christian chivalry." It is also the picture of joyful escape, and the picture of Heine's deliverance.

Quite otherwise is an attitude like Millet's, though his characteristic paintings are more than most the expression of perpetual deep feelings—but they are mainly based on actual sight, on a severe realism. (When I speak of Millet, I speak of the man, the Barbizon man,

Welcome to England! Call out to him  
The trees with tongues of green—  
We rejoice, O King, that thou  
Hast escaped from Austrian durance.

For the King it is well in the free air,  
He feels as if new-born;  
He thinks of the Austrian prison air,  
And he gives the spurs to his horse.

### THIRD LECTURE

the man of the forest of Fontainebleau, not of the youngster who tried experiments and worked for bread at the moment, and also was learning his trade, as we all must, never knowing it well enough.) We all know that he suffered much from the meanness of the men who pressed about him, but that meanness of mind that he felt in others has left no trace in his works. Except for an absence of all vulgarity, of all commonplace, of all that may degrade, there is nothing in their severe serenity, or sadness, to imply even the feeling of disdain, a feeling so apparent in the man he most admired, Michael Angelo. A singular fate chose him to express forever certain things from out of which he was born, and into which he returned. His antecedents and his origin are in reality the subject of his pictures; I mean of those by which he separates himself entirely from all other painters and will be remembered. Therefore his early story is all-important. It has the note of his pictures, austerity, the nature of the landscape of his birthplace, beaten by the winds and rains of the Channel, and simple and stern in form. It is occupied by the somewhat harsh descendants of Normans, the men who conquered England. The names of places through that part of France indicate that from there came the persistent invaders of England and adventur-

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ers to other lands, Sicily, Italy, the Canaries. The name of the first patron, that is to say, of the man who first gave an order to our artist when he began to paint at home, is the same as that of the bold Norman burgher who, standing before the altar of the abbey church at Caën at the burial of William the Conqueror, claimed the place and the price of the grave as belonging to his own estate, of which he had been unjustly deprived by the building of the church. The Normans and their descendants everywhere are fond of law; fond of property; fond of everything steady; they are acquisitive; they are not always pleasant, but whenever there has been a chance for them to develop some great form of poetry in action, or in what we call the arts, they have done so.

On the cliffs of La Hogue, that overlook the sea by Cherbourg, in the hamlet of Gruchy, Jean François Millet was born, October 4, 1814. His first name came from his father's, Jean Louis, and the second from the love for St. Francis of Assisi, that filled the austere soul of his grandmother, who was the real head of the family, according to ancestral habits. For each part of what we call France has separate qualities, a separate existence, exceedingly different, absolutely contradictory, and what is called France is an ideal which does

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not exist in the actual people. There can be no greater difference than between this Norman here and the southern Frenchman, almost a Spaniard, or belonging to the Mediterranean, or else the slow, ponderous Fleming of northern France, or again of Lorraine, and formerly of Alsace. All these parts of France, within the time of two lives, have been joined together by law, by force, by tyranny, by profit, by all the things that gradually help, but they each in their own day had as separate an existence as any nation on earth. So that when we come to Millet's origin, we can feel that this special man of pure Norman blood had not in himself the same thing to say, so as to be easily understood by the southern Frenchman with whom he lived every day and with whom he shared friendly ideas. But those ideas, those which the French define as "behind one's head," remain absolutely different.

They were no commonplace people, these peasant proprietors, of whom Millet was born, who in frugality and unremitting toil, and in another characteristic so important and so different that we can hardly realise it here—"in the respectability of admitted poverty"—in religious practice and the fear of God, maintained a large family on the few inherited acres. Understand that it was respectable to be poor, and to admit it, and that

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it might be a special gift of God to be poor, it might be a special grace that one had to endure. It was a special grace that one had to work; it was a special grace that one had not all the temptations of happiness. Such a realisation of fate gave to those people, and probably might give all of us more or less, a dignity of mind which is not otherwise explainable without this inspiration.<sup>1</sup>

Millet's mother was of a family of gentlemen who were broken in fortune by the great Revolution. His father had a great sense of beauty, and early called the child's attention to the perfection of natural objects, to the lines and arrangement of the landscape about them. He was fond of music also, and noted the church chaunts with the care and elegance of a mediæval scribe. Here again he taught the boy what could be made out of the forms of letters. There was an uncle, a miller, who read Pascal and Montaigne and the great Jansenists of the seventeenth century; that is to say, he read two of the great opposite thinkers in the very best forms that one of the most classical of languages has developed. He may have been also according to some re-

<sup>1</sup> Let us be reminded of the Persian poet. Dejâmi wrote: "Oh, Lord! Do Thou honour my head by giving me the crown of poverty."

"On the road that leads to Thee, make me draw back from any path that does not lead to Thee."



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ports, and apparently also by something of Millet's story, affected by what is called Jansenism, that is to say, perhaps a stricter view of the church than the average church has developed. Another uncle was a physician and chemist, once indeed an associate of Spallanzani. Another uncle was a peasant priest, who, at the risk of his life, refused to conform with the state against his conscience. That was during the French Revolution. Later, when freed from church obligations, he helped, enormous in size and strength, at the harsh field labours, still keeping the dress of his cloth and observing its rules in little as well as great things, and teaching besides the children too poor to pay for schooling.

But the grandmother was the great influence. She was the director and help of all: her austere ideas of duty and religion, mingled, as Millet has said, with the love of Nature, as they did in the life of that St. Francis, after whom she had named the little boy François. "Wake up," she used to say at dawn, "wake up, little Francis; already the birds have begun to sing the glory of God." That, you will remember, is a following of St. Francis, of the story of his love of Nature as expressing the glory of the Creator and the happiness which all should have. They all read St. Augustine and

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the "Lives of the Saints" and St. Jerome's letters, which the painter later read and reread, and also the works of the great opposing bishops, Bossuet and Fénelon.

Later, when the boy went to school the exquisite charm of Virgil moved him. Virgil and the Bible remained his books to the end. They are the books of his great pictures if we see them right.

But the boy's duties were those of outside work, and for eighteen years he laboured with his father and his kindred. His father, however, had always felt kindly toward the boy's attempts at drawing. One day, on his making some special drawing, his father said: "I should have been willing to have thee taught the painter's trade; they say it is beautiful, but I needed thee: now thy brothers are growing up, and I shall not prevent thy learning what thou desirest."

So that they went to the town of Cherbourg and showed the drawings to a painter of the place, who recognised a great promise and began directing the boy in a training interrupted by his father's death. Jean François returned for a time to help the family, then returned to study under an artist professor at the Cherbourg College. Then for a time he drew and copied pictures in the city museum, which contains some fairly

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good examples of various old schools, and indeed at least one interesting Rubens. The boy read also all that he could find, from Homer to Cooper's novels. Within a very small place were some few advantages. I am referring not to his country place, his country living, and what he saw that way, but to the ordinary teaching that a much smaller town then, than now, could give to a boy who had a taste for art. Then upon the recommendation of his teacher the municipality of Cherbourg agreed to give young Millet an annuity of two hundred dollars to allow him to study in Paris more seriously. Two hundred dollars—of course we are talking of a great many years back—and then, in France it would go farther than our dollars do here. With this small amount and a little aid from home, Millet began his studies and work in Paris. He was then twenty-two years old and now independent for the first time, and therefore dependent upon his own resources, having to earn something to supplement the two hundred dollars. He had read, as you see. Without knowing it he had prepared his views of art and the direction of his technique. But he suffered from isolation. He had already developed a shyness that never left him, and he always felt this when he met a stranger or a new question. This shyness, the habit of silence, that we know to be born of

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the fields, made Millet appear to the youngsters of his time a "Barbarian," "a man of the woods," as they said.

The young "Barbarian" had to choose a master, and we have seen how he felt toward modern French art. He entered the studio of Delaroche, then one of the most famous and successful painters. Many well-known names were among his fellow-students. They did not understand him, though his teacher in a way understood the merits of the beginner's points. They were not those which he specially taught. Yes, there were many of those students, men of considerable mark afterward, and one of my great sorrows was to find among them at the time Millet was beginning really to mark his very course, to find a distrust, a disbelief, and almost a hatred of him.

Millet's consolation lay in the works of the old masters, in Michael Angelo's designs, in the early paintings he saw in the Louvre. They "magnetised" him, as he said. When he was alone in his little garret "he thought alone of those fervid, sweet masters who have made human creatures so passionate as to be beautiful, and so nobly beautiful that they are images of God." This I take from a letter of Millet's to his friend Sensier. Millet looked at the eighteenth-century work mostly

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later, imitating what it had, or at least some part of what it had. He little knew at first that soon he should have to imitate it, or suggest it, or recall it in colouring, to supply the constant market which is made by the furnishings and furniture of a period which is still necessarily in the fashion, as being more connected than any other with modern life. But this was later, when he was driven to do anything that might give food and lodging and a little time for graver study. Delaroche, who had thought of making him an assistant, chilled him by explaining that whether he deserved it or not, the support he could give him in his contest for the Roman prize, which sends a youth free to Italy and study of the masters, naturally could not be his (Millet's) until another more favoured, but less deserving, pupil was helped first. This man, who did get the Roman prize, is known only by the fact.

The whole course of Millet in art, the course of French art, was thereby changed to suit a young man of some unimportance to whom the great man, the manager of the French art patronage, wished to give a little favour.

Millet then was deterred from further remaining with Delaroche, who yet had otherwise been kind and gener-

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ous to him. He then decided to work by himself, for himself. He had made a studio friend of some means, who studied with him and helped him to sell little pictures and drawings, that Millet made, by his friend's advice, more or less imitations of the eighteenth century. These paintings and drawings, which we call among artists "potboilers," realised small sums, four dollars, let us say, and sometimes they went down to a dollar or less. Also portraits at one dollar, and with these sums Millet managed to continue his more serious studies. Once he went back to the town of Cherbourg, where he had some orders, whose execution seemed unsuccessful to the people there. With what he had of his own and his little gains he dared to marry, and brought his wife with him to Paris. Then began the more serious struggle from which he never absolutely escaped.

Delacroix, on the contrary, remains a bachelor. He knows; he has been brought up in another way, and he repays the training of high society; he knows, and he refuses anything which will entangle anybody else with himself. Delacroix knows beforehand, without any experience and without any training, and he keeps firmly to that all his life. Nor for the man Millet, of the temperament I have suggested, with a view of the world



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which I have described, so opposite to the other who accepts the world at its worst, could anything else be more expressive of the difference.

Millet's work at this time shows occasionally the future gravity that we note. It is usually either very realistic in manner of study, or is merely a pleasing arrangement of colour and form sufficient to make an appeal to a public for a reward to keep the little family together. Millet later did right to close out his past. It had nothing to do but to accustom him to the use of paint, which is after all much like the use of language in literature; to handle a brush; to get what other people had been at; to decide whether he liked this, or whether he liked that, or the other. Some pieces of this time are beautiful, but they are not really the man; they are "better painted," if I may use the French sordid term; they are in more conformable technique than some of the greater work and the more important; and by better technique I don't mean higher technique, I mean technique which is complete in itself and rounded out, which explains itself and has all its laws developed, while the great technique of Millet with which he ended, has no continuation for average men; it cannot be imitated; it would be an unpardonable mistake, a piece of insolence to try to do the same thing again. It would be



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inexcusable. Certain things are allowed to certain people and not to others.

Some appreciation Millet met, but not enough to help him far. His wife died, and Millet, broken in mind for a time, escaped and made for his old home. There again he did better, had a little success and gathered a little money. Marrying again, he ventured a second time to Paris and was slowly finding his way to the expression by which we know him later. He painted pictures upon imaginative subjects, or stories, motives forever real and lyrical, but which works were not formed by any expression of his own passion, therefore not true essentially. Then he slowly made his way to the expression by which we know him later. According to the usual habit of painters, especially at that moment, many of his pictures represented nude subjects, which allowed him to study further, of course, as we students know, the construction of the human form at the expense of the purchaser. Nor should I note the fact were it not that upon this question of the morality of the subject turned the decision of Millet's later life. The question is placed in a letter addressed to him by his grandmother, referring to his painting of an imaginary temptation of St. Jerome. Its biblical appeal is the key to the mind of the family. This is what the old lady wrote: "Thou

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art painting a portrait of Saint Jerome mourning over the dangers of youth. Do thou, dear child, live as he did; draw therefrom a holy profit; follow the example of that man of thy profession who said 'I paint for eternity.' For whatever reason, never allow thyself to do any wrong work. Lose not the presence of God; with Saint Jerome, think continually of the call to judgment."

Like all true artists Millet was in love with life. He pictured it as it came to his memory or imagination, but the temper of the man was too serious to pass over that line which limits our view of life to self-abandonment to its impulses; and whatever his subjects, his rendering of them is essentially chaste. In fact he resembles the great Tintoretto, whose important representations of classical mythology are as far from censure as any religious work. They are merely the human form in healthy, glorious innocence, realising therein the words sometimes attributed to Saint Thomas Aquinas, giving, to the comfort of us artists and students, in a single definition the innocence of art itself; calling it "The place of innocence"; the land of innocence; it has no hurt in its condition.

Millet had begun to make friends and earn a little; whereupon came the well-known episode, his hearing two men who were looking at a picture of his in a shop

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window—some women bathing. One of them had said: "That picture is by a certain Millet, who paints only naked women." Our artist's dignity was revolted. He told his wife what he had heard, saying: "If it suits you I shall never do anything more of that kind of work. Our life must become harder, and harder for you, but I shall be free, and shall accomplish what has filled my mind for a long time." To this she answered, being a woman of like turn of mind: "I am ready." It is not, as you see, from want of admiration in the mind of this man for the paintings, the drawings, the designs, everything in which the nude has been most successfully and splendidly used, from Delacroix, whom he liked, to Michael Angelo, away back. He did not judge them, or object in the slightest, but for him it was evident he could not do certain things and have any doubt in his own mind. The pair had a little money then laid up. They left Paris for the country, at Barbizon, which was to become the continuous residence of Millet for the next twenty-seven years—the remainder of his life. He found other painters there; among others, Rousseau, who with him was to give the forest adjoining a celebrity in art sufficient to name the school, with a better name, I think, than that of Barbizon, the school of Fontainebleau.

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Then began, in 1849 and 1850, the development of the extraordinary career which separates Millet from all the other painters before him and which will never be repeated. The charm of landscape surrounding him had seized him. It was sufficiently different from his native open spaces, often wind-swept and barren, to bring in him a new enthusiasm for what Nature says: "The calm and grandeur of the forest is so great that I feel as if I were afraid: I don't know what the trees say to each other, but they say something which we do not quite understand, because we do not speak the same language." That is in a letter to Sensier in 1850. Besides these new varieties of shapes of things, different, but yet the same; dawn, the midday heat, the cool of the evening, the rain of autumn, the snow, every mood of which brought back the man's eighteen years of field life. Millet again saw peasants somewhat similar to those of his youth, to those from whom he sprang. All their ways he understood: he himself could instruct a man at work in the field how to do a better job. His friend and my friend, William Hunt, our American, told me that he had seen Millet tie up bundles of corn to prove to some peasants how much better it could be done. And this is the important point; all the more was Millet impelled to disengage from the realism which he under-

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stood and could copy, the ideal type of each of the functions in the life of the worker in the field.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore it is not, I say, *a sower, a reaper, a gleaner* that he has given; it is *the sower, the reaper, the gleaner*. In that he resembles the Greek masters, who have expressed themselves under the form of sculpture, let us say, and who have given us great types, which may or may not be portraits, but which have fixed the expression of certain human conditions in such a way that we unconsciously think of them as the definition of things.

For that very reason Millet's work tended to a form of technique which resembles the idea of sculpture. That is its great charm, its superiority, but at the same time its frequent limitation as far as the differential idea of painting interferes. He was forced to a balance of expression which obliged him to forego often many charms belonging to the special art of painting, which is a representation of surfaces. These great sacrifices, sacri-

<sup>1</sup> Millet's brother told me, showing me one of the engravings he had made, from the painter, that he himself had posed for that peasant in the picture, though he himself had lost the habit of the fields and was no longer a peasant, with the ideas of a peasant, the impressions of a peasant. But the real peasant could not do it so typically as this man brought now to understand, though for him it was merely the memory of his boy life, and Millet had made the brother pose after having tried over and over again from the actual peasant. You will see that this is entirely contrary to our usual way of looking at realism.

MILLET  
"ON THE  
CLIFFS OF  
LA HOGUE"



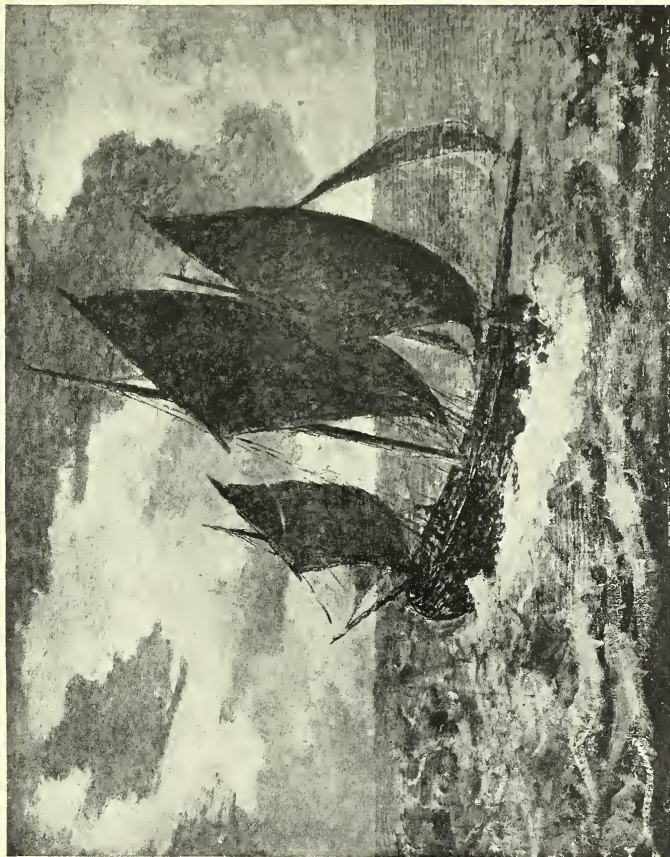
NOW IN THE COLLECTION OF JOHN G. JOHNSON







MILLET  
"MARINE"

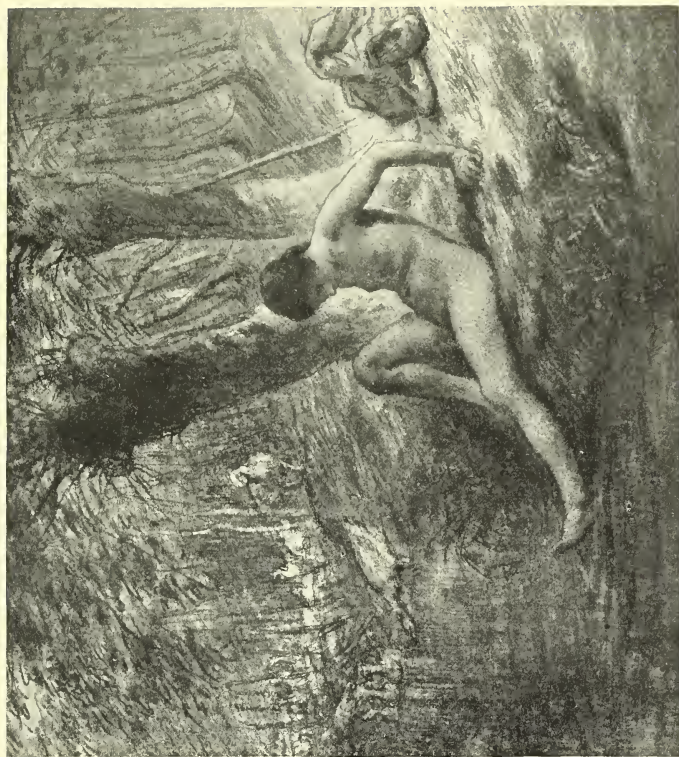


IN THE  
COLLECTION OF  
JOHN G. JOHNSON



MILLET

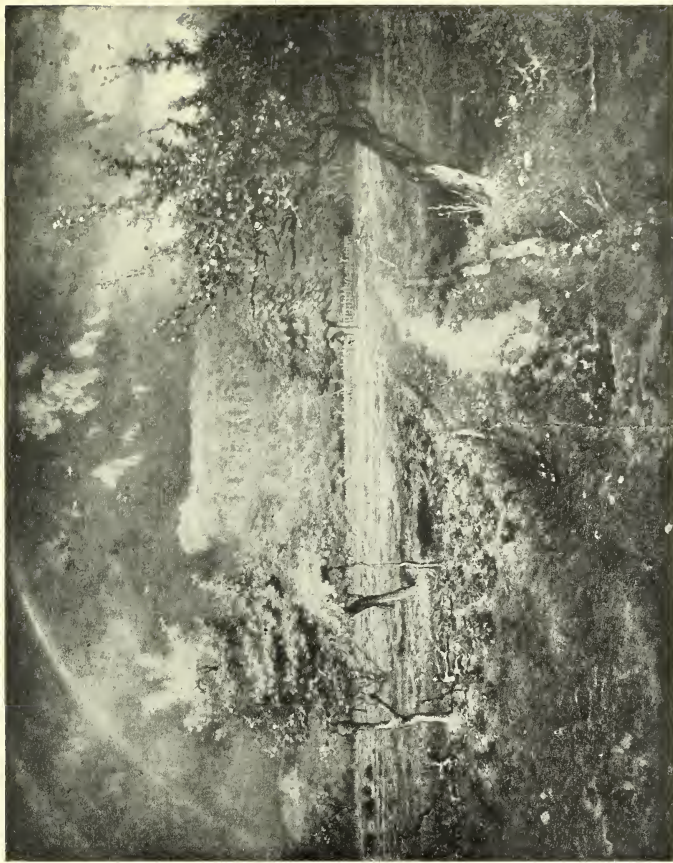
"GOOSE GIRL BATHING"



DRAWING



MILLET  
"SPRING "



THE LOUVRE







MILLET

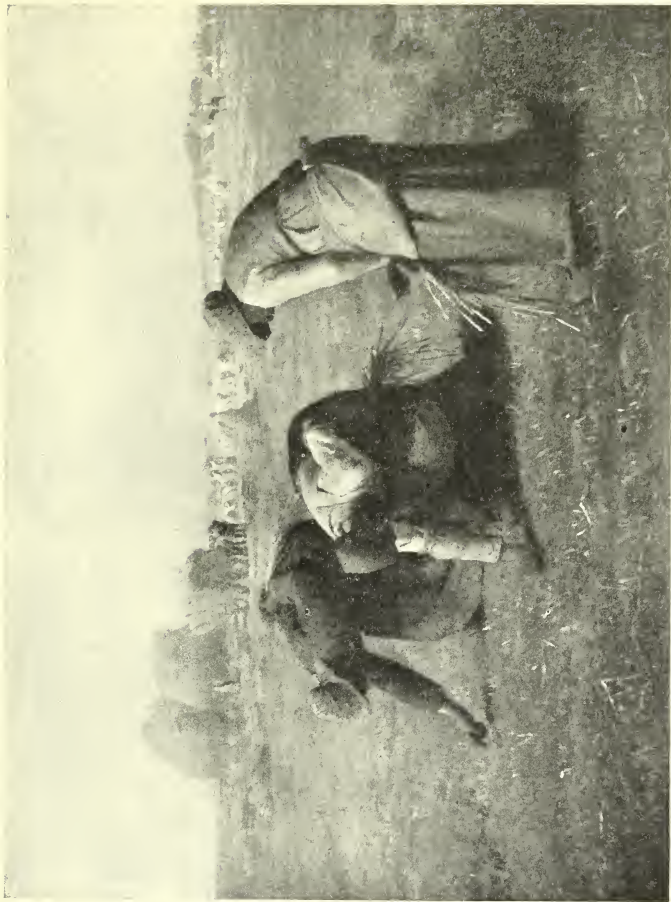
"LA FILEUSE"

NOW IN THE COLLECTION OF J. J. HILL





MILLET  
"THE  
GLEANERS"



THE LOUVRE





MILLET: "THE END OF THE DAY"

NOW IN THE COLLECTION OF AUGUST BELMONT



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fices of beauties he himself loved, shocked the public of his time and many of his fellow-artists. They will always be felt, and will repel to some extent the desire for charm that we naturally expect in the representation by colour.

But as they are logical and necessary and caused by great emotion and noblest sincerity they will also be accepted as final. No one without the mind and aim of Millet can hope to tread a similar path, nor can the first impulse that created these pictures come again easily. It came from long inheritance of hard work, accepted in a religious disposition of mind, in acceptance of labour and suffering as the lot of the many, and indeed, as a *divine gift*. It was based also on the rarest of all possible expressions through art, the ancestral respect for poverty, and in so far he was misunderstood by most people, especially by the critics of his day, who thought that they saw social protest in what was really the expression of duty and resignation to the common fate of most men. The echoes of these objections have died away, but they served as a means of opposing the painter and preventing his obtaining reasonable recognition, and were used to turn away his pictures from the great exhibitions, the Salons, which is the great French means of appealing to the general public. They were even refused as immoral; that was the

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ground; they were immoral, they were vicious, according to these gentlemen, who were doing all they could to disgrace French art themselves, more or less frankly. The gravity and sometimes the harshness in Millet's works met an opposing current in the art of his time among the official artists, the teachers of the great government school, and all those who desired to be amused by paintings rather than to be moved.

Difficult as was Millet's struggle, and though his gains were but just enough to support himself and his family, he had some sincere friendships among a few of the artists, notably Rousseau. They formed a manner of "twinsip" in habits, yet the two were very different in their social beginnings, ideas, and aspirations. Rousseau as far as possible had been a manner of Republican, a firm believer in new theories, thinking probably in little sympathy with the ancient, traditional religious feeling.

Slowly the perception grew that a great master, absolutely different from and yet belonging to classical antiquity, was working for the glory of French art, and as the one recorder of a side of France that explains its extraordinary persistence. Religious art had almost ceased, it had ceased to have any real expression. In these works of Millet remains the feeling which marks



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the great works of the middle ages, in which the soul of old France established a form as important as the Greek. So much of modern France for centuries has moved in another direction that it is but natural that Millet's work should have been appreciated more immediately by Americans, in whom remained a certain mental tradition belonging to an older time. If in your sculpture room you look about and see any fair rendering of some of the older mediæval figures, you will see in a moment what I mean. Those are nearer Millet; his are more decidedly traditional than any other work could possibly be.

Millet's paintings, as I said, came to America for our admiration at a time when he was misunderstood in France. The very seriousness which troubled the French mind was rather an appeal here than a difficulty. I think it should remain a satisfaction and pride to us that we saw a great deal further than the official dispensers of fame in cultivated France.

The story closes as it began. Our artist painted to the end in difficulties, very often in ill-health, which came from earlier hardships, but he managed to bring up a family and to live a life which does honour to man.



## FOURTH LECTURE

*Decamps and Diaz may be fairly held within the Barbizon circle; one associated with the place itself, the other being a precursor and in personal sympathy with the others. Both of these men were welcomed by the world, in opposition to the fortunes of Delacroix and Millet. Decamps was thereby removed from sordid cares. With much nobility of feeling he withdrew awhile toward the end of his career, with regret at having been too easily successful and to prepare for more serious work. His beginnings: poor teaching in part. He begins to absorb, however, the universal teaching of art in the older masters. He travels in Switzerland, in Italy, later in the East. His first impressions there are so carried out with certain early teachings that he forms a distinct manner, which even concealed is to be discovered. It is in part the use of certain great lines of division. Later he felt that he had something more to say than the things by which he had acquired respectable fame and fortune. His attempts that way—which are extraordinary as story, and fine as feeling and poetic grasp—did not meet the public at once. Meanwhile, accident closed suddenly his career. Diaz—successful as being always liked by men inside and out—not often taken seriously. A natural painter; more so perhaps than some more serious artists. His work has also a charm of analogy which unites it to that of the men he admired.*

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**I**N this lecture I shall speak about two of the painters who may be fairly held within the "Barbizon" School: one intimately associated with the place itself, and the other connected by being a precursor and in personal sympathy with these other men. These then are Decamps and Diaz. You will remember that I was to continue, with these two artists, a consideration of the greater precursor Delacroix, because they were more or less connected with him, by intention, by manner, and by time. Millet, who is the farthest removed from Delacroix, was connected by sympathy, by admiration, by the fact that he was an intimate friend of other men, who were connected with Delacroix; but he, however far away in feeling, far away in origin, far away in age, had one great precursory trait in common with Delacroix, the hatred of the theatrical, of the commonplace so-called "classical," in the making of what he did. The theatrical for both these men, in different ways, was an abhorrence. Of course they are also united by the fact

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that they were both lofty souls, pure-minded men ; that they did not live for the public ; that they followed their own lives so as to live a clean life, free from what they thought diminished the value of man. Of course their contempt for the crowd was returned by the crowd for a long time with more or less indifference, but time usually brings in the mass of people ; and prejudice, which is bad in one way is good in another ; and people who would never have known of either of these men, if they had had to discover them, admired them at last.

Conversely to the opposition encountered by Delacroix, approval, consequent purchase, and still further, freedom from sordid care was the part of Decamps and Diaz, who, welcomed by the crowd, were always successful. That these men had also some touch of nobility of character is emphasised by the fact that this successful man Decamps withdrew while at the end of his life (he died in 1861), with a regret at having been too easily successful, and a desire to prepare himself again for another career.

He was younger than Delacroix ; born on the “ third day of the third month of the third year of the century,” as he himself says : “ That was the only remarkable thing about my childhood.” He was a rough boy, difficult to manage, fond of neither reading nor writing,

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and was sent out into the country to be got rid of. There, paddling in the river water, running in the woods, burned by the sun, accustomed to do without hat or shoe, he acquired a love for rocks and woods and pasture that brought tears to his eyes when he was brought back to school and had to learn his own language again, and the dreadful Latin grammar. He says that he "resembled a young fox tied by the neck to the leg of a chair."

Thus the desire to record those things that he loved took hold of him as a child. He had lost them and he could get them back by drawing. He was hardly out of school before he entered the studio of a worthy but indifferent artist, who, however, taught him some geometry, some architecture and some perspective, upon which materials he has curiously based the general project of almost all that he has done, however much it may be covered up by the story, by the light and shade, and by a curious appreciation of strange and far-away things. He then tried the regular studio teachings under an excellent master, but a gentle and too kind one, who let him have too much of his own way; and he was bored, and escaped, and lost thereby the chance of that fair discipline, that abandonment of one's self to the necessary circumstances, which, of course, makes part of any



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education. He remained to a certain extent therefore uneducated, though he is a remarkable executant and almost a great painter. Later he regretted all this, as we shall see, when too late. He happened first to paint some little pictures, was at once successful in selling them, and he gave up attempts at a more serious education. He made caricatures, which were a fashion of the day; little hunting scenes, and representations of such life as he saw about him; all works which require his further fame to make them worthy of notice. He is one of that great army of illustrators which mark the nineteenth, and probably will continue marking the twentieth century.

But as he looked at everything and at pictures also, he began to absorb the universal teachings of art. He liked the old painters, the old masters, and, at a great distance, saw the greatness of Rembrandt. Strangely, but wisely, another of his great admirations was Poussin, the classical image-maker, the refined and sometimes rather dry impersonator of a classical dream of the Scriptures, or of the late Roman views of poetry. Delacroix had already begun his career with the sudden assertion of the great painting of "Dante and Virgil." Just at that time Decamps, who admired him, managed to be able to travel into the south of France, a country

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of light and shade; into Switzerland and into Italy. In the subjects from the south of France and from Italy which began his career, his successful career, the use of the geometrical arrangement, of the perpendicular and horizontal, of the great cast shadow, all of which marks him in all that he does, are noticeable. Whatever he learned, though he learned so little, was well learned and marked throughout his whole career. The same arrangements, the same perpendiculars, the same large and small openings, the sense of architecture, the sense of construction, mark even the paintings where figures are prominent; and the figures, though they are very important, would hardly hold without the great lines to place them. The subjects of a single figure big in proportion to the rest show that however important a figure, however it tells the story, it is really a part of the story of all these great lines. Even in "The Shepherd," though less visible than in other examples, you will see that the great horizon and the relative perpendicular of the rocks really make the story, and the figures would have been placed otherwise in any way that would insist upon these great provisions. In that way Decamps is almost a great man; he is so full of the origin of what he wishes to do, and he so contrives to make a picture of whatever subject he tries. It becomes

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at once a balanced whole, a little world, with all its parts interdependent. And if in "The Smoker" his great *parti pris* is not quite so visible, yet the moment your mind remembers the horizontal and perpendicular, you can see again that the seat, and the chair, the steps, the little opening above, all that is really the picture, and that the man is arranged to fit the scene.

These two pictures are the reminiscences of his Italian experience. They are not absolutely of that one date; they are influenced by his trip, and he continued for a long time to bring in these reminiscences. But the great thing that happened to him was to have been a little later in the East. There probably began the desire for an expression of a beauty in the use of great lines; a beauty of a certain kind, for beauty is not an exact entity, the beauty that he found in the spread of the horizon, in large spaces, in great horizontals broken by abrupt perpendiculars, which beauty he pursued throughout the remainder of his life.

He had already learned to paint in a remarkable way, and had begun the habit of painting certain comic subjects, notably the placing of monkeys in the characters of men, as painters, as picture experts, as cooks, and for a good part of his life he continued in this small vein, partly out of fun, partly because it helped him to study

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a technique which was becoming more and more successful, and also because it brought him a great deal of money. In these pictures he could pursue the study of light and shade of which he is still one of the representatives, although his expression of these mysteries is narrower than what greater masters have accomplished. I have shown you how he brought back from the East the love of wide horizons, of great spaces rather, and developed still further that little seed of geometry, architecture, and perspective, by which he began as a boy. In the painting known as the "Syrian Landscape," you see this love of wide horizons and great spaces. There in the East, in his travels, he also found great shadows cast upon blank walls upon which fell a dazzling light. Those ancient walls, gilded by the sunlight of many years, showing their cement, the marble, or brick, or stone of which they were made, blotched with moss and pierced with narrow, dark holes of windows or of doors, and making sudden perpendiculars upon dry levels of pavements, or of earth, are the cornerstone of his pictures. He made no attempt at reproducing all these things literally, any more than the people he placed around them or the broken skies which covered them. Others have been more exact, but no one has given the unity of that feeling more than he has; and as he

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felt thoroughly the difference between a picture and a study, he has composed with clouds and trees and figures, and has made the variations of his atmosphere to accentuate, or repeat, the main impression of his first aim. You can see then in the "Syrian Landscape," for instance, which is a fair example of the interdependence of every part, how the clouds are chosen for those masses of trees, for the horizon, for every part; the sky is a sky arranged by him. It may have been that way, or he may have tried to see it that way, but this is in one sense not realism. He was taken in his day for a realist: and in a certain way, as copier of a certain part of nature which he used to play with and make his picture of, he *was* a realist; but he is not a realist at all, in the sense of so many who do not understand that a picture is not a piece cut out of nature which could be continued indefinitely if you had an order for a little bit more of it; but that, on the contrary, it is a little earth of its own, a little world of its own, every part of which affects every other part. In that way this new man continued the older tradition. The "Turkish Butcher," one of his typical Eastern pictures, represents the extreme defects and qualities of his work. The house stands against the intense blue sky; the front of the shop projecting, blazes dully in the white sunlight; a dog

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crouches near a mass of something, a goat is fastened to the door awaiting its fate; bits of meat from which drip blood are hung on the line of spikes, while inside, the butcher, with bare arms, leaning against the wall, smokes his long pipe. The light is powerful but oppressive, the sweetness of the sky does not light up the shadows, and in the very ugly subject one feels oppressed and troubled. That was the unbeautiful side of Decamps, however wonderful the work; the heaviness of the shadows, the fear of not having them sufficiently indicated as cast, the anxiety to make use of the extraordinary technique which he had invented for representing a wall, the surface of a wall, or the surface of the earth; a technique not absolutely his own, for he must have followed to some extent some of the Dutch painters, or the Flemish—at least they might have met him halfway and given him the clue to follow. But there was another reason and a strong business reason. The demand for his technique was great in these particular things, this particular kind of wall, this particular kind of cast shadow, this look of solidity; all that is different from what other men did, and is done in a peculiar way. And that he sold. But the workman has often covered up the poet who really was there, and the impression is rarely quite a pleasant one. But the impression remains,



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and it is difficult to forget anything important of his when once seen, he is so insistent upon the points he makes. With smaller things he is a little the victim of his time, which was beginning to ask for the *machinery* of his work and cared little for much else. But, whenever a higher subject, something he cared for more, something which appealed to him, took hold of him, then Decamps became more than a mere executant, and in the attempt at rendering new difficulties he moved more easily. That, of course, you all know is the type of the man who is either great, or might be great, or belongs anyhow to the class above. That is to say, the weight of the difficulty is the reason of his rising. This "Le Chasseur" is again one of the fine types of his landscape painting. It does not matter where and what it actually pictures, but we feel the solidity of the turf, the solidity of the rock, the solidity of the path, the manner in which the path leads up to the woodland; we feel the air moving about that clump of trees; we see how the horseman may go around it; we feel the construction he had put in, in the way in which an architect, if he built with earth, might like to indicate; you can see that nature may have given that long sweep of trees to the left, but at any rate he put it in such a way as to stop his picture without your thinking it; the picture stops on the right,



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though it might go on indefinitely. He has arranged that by the intersection of a few lines. The whole thing is a masterpiece of engineering, of arrangement of lines, massed shadow, and of course, as I said before, it is a reminiscence of his early training, of his geometry, of his perspective, of all that first beginning which showed him what things were made of. And again, the sky above may have been like that; it probably was; it has no appearance of having been invented. At any rate he has thrown it right in where it would hold together and strengthen his picture; it helps the solidity of the earth, and yet, in itself, hangs over, instead of being a drapery behind.

So in the "Turkish Children Coming Out of School," the "Children Watching a Tortoise," in the "Watch at Smyrna," the difficulties of expressing movement and character carried him with them, and the pictures are, to a certain extent, more than mere records of a given story; they are typical. Nobody will ever do over again the subjects of Decamps.

One begins to feel the poet who more and more disengaged himself in Decamps. The great landscapes, the "Syrian Landscape," the "Diogenes," the "Muses," blend together his great observation of nature and the desire to make a synthesis, what we call a picture. "The

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Tower of Bordeaux," which I think is tolerably disagreeable, is a thing that some of us may have seen at Bordeaux in the Crypt, where certain dead bodies are shown in this state, and we all know that things of that kind impress the public, who always like to have something horrible at times, but I think we could do without it and see something a little more poetic. Again, the "Porte de Ferme" is singularly personal, but it is not an imitation of nature. I think you can see in it the points I mark, the use of the background and the seat and the door and the woman, whatever is there, the horizontal and perpendicular to confine it within the line of the picture. When you think of the way Millet does the same subject, you realise that this work of Decamps is not exactly great work. But there it is, and it has its character. There are "The Witches," a work of great importance in his own mind. It has the element of good taste and is well worth seeing; intersection of lines again, so carefully used you can hardly realise how very important those few horizontals are. Then again we come to the greater landscape, that "Syrian Landscape" which we saw, I think can be called one of these. The "Muses," in which again the figures are used simply to charm you with a little look of motion, or a little look of passing, or moving, and are still merely orna-

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ments in the general arrangement of the picture; but they have, with the picture, a sense of peace, a sense of far away, and also a sense of having been seen. The composition, however simple, however child-like, is not easily deciphered. You do not see why he placed his figures that way unless you think of the clues I gave, the clue of the great horizontal.

To the people of his time he must have seemed something of a realist. In reality, notwithstanding his extraordinary power of copying nature, he never did otherwise than use it to record an impression he had received; and in certain cases his pictures, deficient as they may be, are final types of the particular subject. The "Turkish Cavalry Passing a Ford" is a beautiful example of what I mean. The Oriental subject has given him choice of colour and form and of a certain individual movement for each rider. The picture might easily be called "The Passing of the Ford." The general movement of the horses treading their way; the stepping out on dry land, and the drawing up when landed, are given in five single figures whose separate movements make one combined motion. There may be one hundred before or one hundred after, or only those few, but the movement would be the same; and one feels that the picture is the story of the movement.

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The absence of continuous early study, and the desire of making that study for himself and not for what is called success, began to trouble him as an older man, to whom a larger view of the world and greater sympathy of humanity had come. And so when his education by life made him desirous of a greater expression, when the intension of his work grew larger and the human story he tried to tell more subtle or more intense, or more full of feeling, then the narrowness of his very successful and very splendid work could not fit (and he saw it), his newer and greater ambitions. It is infinitely to his credit that he perceived this, and infinitely to his credit that the great public are scarcely aware of what Decamps could have done.

Accident closed his career at the moment I am describing, but already he had shown in his painting the beginning of a larger life by the suggestion of a story in the landscape which represents "Christ Crossing the Lake of Genesareth." It is what we saw before, a lake, a beautiful lake, nothing more, with high hills; but somehow or other, you feel that the little bark that crosses it is so important that there must be a story in it. There is no other point indicated; it is hardly visible, but in some subtle way the painter has managed, by the use of all the lines, to place at one moment of motion the

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most important line, and that one is that of the little bark. He had begun to be something more than a remarkable painter, and his imagination asked for the record of great impressions.

The great sketch of the "Defeat of the Cimbri by Marius" is a proof of what he had hoped to do. It is the representation of any great struggle, in which a vast multitude charging against a smaller number on a well-chosen point of vantage, are driven back by an orderly counter-charge. One can see the story without knowing who these people are; one can see on which side victory must settle. The spread of landscape is extraordinary, as well as the impression of the quantity of combatants. According to his principle, which is that of the great masters, and which the group of artists to which he belongs, however diverse, have always kept, the movement of the clouds and of light and of shade on the great line of the earth are all one with the movement of the figures. This view of art is absolutely different from the modern realistic notion of a possible separation of the meaning of the picture and of the possible facts. For every one knows that the weather may contradict absolutely what man feels or suffers. It is the province of art to bring these things together, whether it be in the hands of Beethoven or Shakespeare,

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or any of the painters who are more than mere copyists. We all know that nature is separate from us; does not sympathise with us; cares very little what happens to us, or may happen; in art we give it a meaning, and in that way realism, absolute realism, if such a thing is possible, would be the most absurd of all representations. In this picture, as in a great many of Decamps, there is still too great use of artifice or tricks, which he learned in beginning to do things for the public; that of using some foreground matter, whether rock or tree, or in this case some of the fugitives, as a theatrical accessory to push back the rest of his picture. For Decamps was the victim of his tricks; so completely indeed that notwithstanding his affiliations and his many admirations, he never quite understood the translation of colour, and light, and atmosphere into gradations of light and dark, which is the essential mechanism of painting, and which was the shibboleth of the school to which he really in nowise belonged.

Corot represents that conclusively. Corot represents what the painters know as the doctrine of "values," the great battle-ground of the last century, and which has remained to us more or less unsettled. That is, the translation of whatever one sees into a certain proportion of dark and light according to the tone and general in-



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tention of the artificial picture; the translation of the light and dark in any particular tone in the real picture, either imagined or seen, into a relative quantity of light and dark in the other. In this case then the colours, as we call them, are merely representatives of light and dark.

Now Decamps, as you will see by the few examples that you have about you here (and there are a good many in the United States, but scattered), Decamps never thoroughly understood that before. He never felt it. He had so bound himself to success by the exaggeration of light and dark at all hazards to make his perpendiculars, as we have seen, count with the great shadows; to make his horizontals count, that it was necessary then to follow this thought and get at any rate the main element of his pictorial world.

The Samson series, with which I shall conclude, are no more than drawings. He had hoped for encouragement; he had hoped for a long life. He was a healthy man, had been a healthy man, fond of exercise, fairly rich, having a great deal of time on his hands, and discouraged by nothing else than that he felt how so far he had not been strictly educated, but that he was still young enough to learn—every man who is worth any-



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thing feels something like this—and that he had something more to say than these things by which he had acquired his fortune. But in the first place the public did not care for these new sketches and smaller paintings and drawings which he began to do. In the next place he himself had so tied himself in his habits that as soon as he began to try to break away from them the result was disagreeable, distressing to the public, who, not knowing exactly what he was after, only saw that the man was not expressing what he really meant, that something in the work was a failure. That began about 1857, at which time I remember the very things quite well, and I remember the sadness of his friends, I remember the impression of doubt that came upon us as to whether the man had, as they said, lost his powers. He had only a few more years to live, though he died by accident.

The Samson series are nothing but drawings, but they are extraordinary in their scope. One realises how later, and very soon after, Gustave Doré absorbed some of the system laid out in these great drawings. And there are also some Turners which are analogous. They are skillful and balanced in arrangement; but this intensifies the imagination implied. In the "Samson Watching the Fires Which he has Lit," the central,

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solitary figure of Samson, sitting with foot in hand, is evidently the cause of the entire picture.

So in the tragic story of "Samson at the Mill." The hopeless solitude of this mutilated giant treading his enforced round under the stick of the guard is made to tell a story of continuous work by the figure of the rat basking in the sun's rays that fall into the mill. And in "Samson Breaking His Bonds," one feels the quiet of the night, out of which Samson leaps at the cry of Delilah, all the more on account of the quiet pattern of moonlight which falls on the floor of the room.

Now in this one of the beautiful stories in which he has used his experience of the East, he has used his love of the great horizons; he has used the pleasure of composition and the reminiscence of many studies to remind one of a biblical story. It is "Joseph sold by his brethren." On the right you will see the well from which he has been sold. It is as identical as if Decamps has said to himself: "Why the story is what I have seen over and over again. I have seen slaves handed out to the caravans"; and he has simply added to that a certain kind of feeling, and he has clarified it and made it bold by the artificial composition in great lines, the great solidity of earth, the indifferent looks of the beasts; and above

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is one cloud balancing over the entire meaning of the picture.

These signs of a greater development in our painter were not received by his admirers with equal satisfaction, nor were most of them capable of feeling the poetic influence that animated him. That assertion of the value of the mind was unpleasant to the men of the "school" and to the men of the school who still felt kindly toward Decamps and contrariwise; the mere admirers of technique felt intensely doubtful, as always, for what Decamps might have been is still unsettled. A successful man otherwise, he had retired to live peacefully in Barbizon and to prepare himself for his new fields. There, in one of his rides through the forest, he was thrown against a tree and died from the effects of the blow in August, 1861.

The Barbizon school is, as we are agreed to understand, a mere convenient way of remembering a number of men whose great characteristic is their personality, and who, consequently, are properly not a school. They represent almost all the tendencies of painters except the strictly academic. There can be no better illustration of the diversity of their aims and of their sympathies than the fact that they all liked and sometimes admired

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one of the men whose name is joined with theirs: Diaz, properly, Narciso Diaz de la Peña. This general good will has always followed his work. I dare say that all of you have the same feeling. It was liked and bought by many who were rebuffed by the severe intentions of the other painters, his friends, or by their passionate love of nature, which in him was the passionate love of painting. It is this charming proof of being born for it which has given to his reputation a seriousness that even his admirers will not desire to insist upon. There was also this, that he was an admirer of the works of other Barbizon painters, and helped the men whose lives and works we are now considering. For some of them he had more than appreciation, he had enthusiastic admiration; his imitation of their ways of looking at nature, his use of as many of their qualities as he could make acceptable to his public and to his practical good sense, have given to much of his work a charm of analogy which runs it into theirs as if he had had the same intention.

He was born early in the century, probably in 1809; a Spaniard, the son of two Spanish exiles who had fled from Spain in the terrible days of the invasion of Napoleon. He remained a Spaniard in so far that the ancestral love of power, of tone, and of colour never gave

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way to the dry cleverness that might have marked a similar French mind. Clever he was, but always within the lines of a real painter, of a man delighting in external shapes, and in the *beauty of the material in which he worked*. Thereby he and the men of the Barbizon school, notwithstanding their not being absolutely perfect painters, differ from many of the men, not only of their own day, but of a later time, who never seem to understand that a painting ought to be properly a pleasant surface to look at.

Diaz's father seems to have disappeared, and his mother took care of him long enough to reach Paris from Bordeaux in a long, toilsome pilgrimage. She had worked as a teacher, earning enough for the simple support of herself and her child, whom she left at her death, when he was ten years old, in charge of the kind Protestant pastor Paira.

Paira took care of the boy, and may have given him, moreover, some book education, but allowed him an extraordinary amount of freedom in his rambles in the country about Paris. There one fine day, after playing, young Diaz fell asleep in the grass and was apparently bitten by a viper. His wound was badly treated by some kind villager, and the result was that the boy had to lose a leg after months of suffering, entering life dis-

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abled, but still with a natural cheerfulness which made him always refer to his wooden leg as somewhat of a joke. He was apprenticed to porcelain painting in the company of other boys, since famous, among them Jules Dupré, Cabat, the distinguished landscape painter, and a famous illustrator, Raffet, a really great man in this smaller way.

The boy adored the theatre; at the same time he began an admiration for Delacroix which influenced his entire life. He tried to study somewhat, notably under a man little remembered, but who seems to have taught him well enough, and who also helped him by negotiating the sale of his first little pictures, "which he produced," said this master of his, "as an apple-tree bears apples." It was fortunate that they dropped off so easily, for they brought small prices; a dollar to five dollars seems to have been the average of payment, but even then the Sancho Panza side of our Spaniard enabled him to put aside money, and to trade successfully; and he seems to have slipped rapidly into the manufacture of every kind of pretty thing which would sell, and yet satisfy sufficiently his love of the beautiful surfaces and shapes and patterns that painting gives. Therefore it is impossible to be severe with him and measure him by the same rule we apply to men with either real or assumed seriousness.



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He began to be an example of a habit which since his day has extended enormously among artists. That is to say, collectorship, or the accumulation of things supposed to be precious, what is roughly called in the shops "antiques," and what we call "bric-à-brac." The middle years of Diaz's life witnessed the development of this modern mania, fostered by many noble impulses; notably a turning back to the story of the past by the writers of England, Germany, and France, and through the better knowledge of foreign countries, and of history in general and the history of art in particular. But for all that it has become a disease even with people who are not artists, and who have more right to indulge in miscellaneous and haphazard admiration. Diaz then appears also to have been a little of a dealer, which is the not nice side of the collector, but which is his danger. Nor would all this be worth noticing were it not one of the special marks of the time and thereby a form of historical statement—the result of our time.

The paintings of our artist became richer in material and in study, and worth more as he obtained higher prices. With all his shrewdness he was not the man to trade on a past reputation, and later in life he even made some seriously grave mistakes in his work, owing to a misplaced desire to give more serious results. He painted



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a great deal from the nude, continuing as well his landscape studies, which helped him to give to his light and fantastic figures a setting with some foundation of reality. As I have said, he was a passionate admirer of Rousseau and of Dupré for landscapes, as he was also of Delacroix and Correggio, for he took only the best of everything for his little manufactured world.

This picture, the "Descent of the Bohemians," is a famous one, one by which he established his reputation. But where is the scene of the forest and trees that he felt and which, alas! the black and white does not render? In others of his works we shall see more distinctly the meaning through the black and white, and we will also see a certain seriousness which must have come to him from other men. There is the "Fontainebleau Forest," which was brought to America by one of our earliest collectors, the late August Belmont. It is the same forest in which he was fostered and where the others would often go. Here it is not a serious affair like those of his friends, but it is, as you see, charming; it gives you a succession of woods and of all sorts of things. How good it must be, when we think we miss all the colour, his charming colour.

That again (referring to another picture), is more real, more a study, like those of his friends, and it is for

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all that a picture; it is not a mere study. There is something, I think, quite charming, called "Les Odalisques," half-way between a sketch and a painting, a composition, an historical subject, and a beautiful artistic result; purely artistic. We see a great "chef," good things cooking, and yet with a sense of delicacy of feeling, of treatment. I used the word cook; I remember a statement from an important artist with regard to Diaz and Rousseau. It was a statement made to me, a student, by my master, Couture, whose specialty, and a useful one at times, was the saying of disagreeable things about other artists. And he, with a justice that I shall try to explain afterward, but which was a result of jealousy, the jealousy of a smaller man, said to me: "Well, for an artist, between Rousseau and Diaz, give me Diaz. Rousseau is a cook sent out to market, bringing in everything that is there; vegetables, leg of mutton, carrots, all that is piled in the basket just as it comes from Nature and that is all there is to it. It is Nature, if you like. Now Diaz is a 'chef.' Out of all these things he makes a mess nice to the taste, and you have not got the sense of the cook bringing in the things any longer." There was in this criticism a justifiable remark in the abstract, that is to say, that the rendering, the mere copying of Nature, is not the realm of



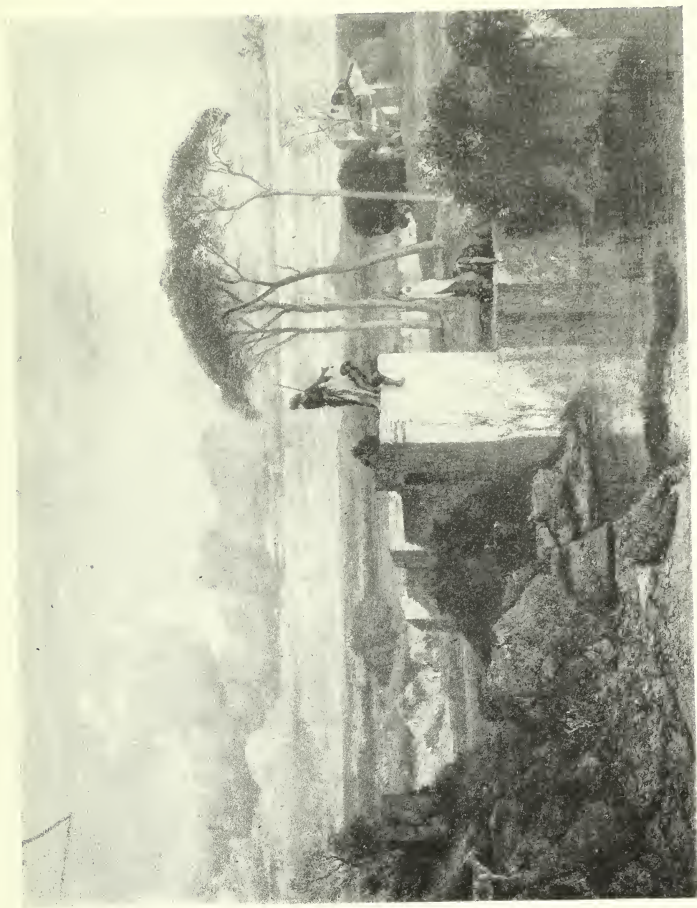
DECAMPS

"THE SMOKER"

FROM LITHOGRAPH BY J. LAURENS



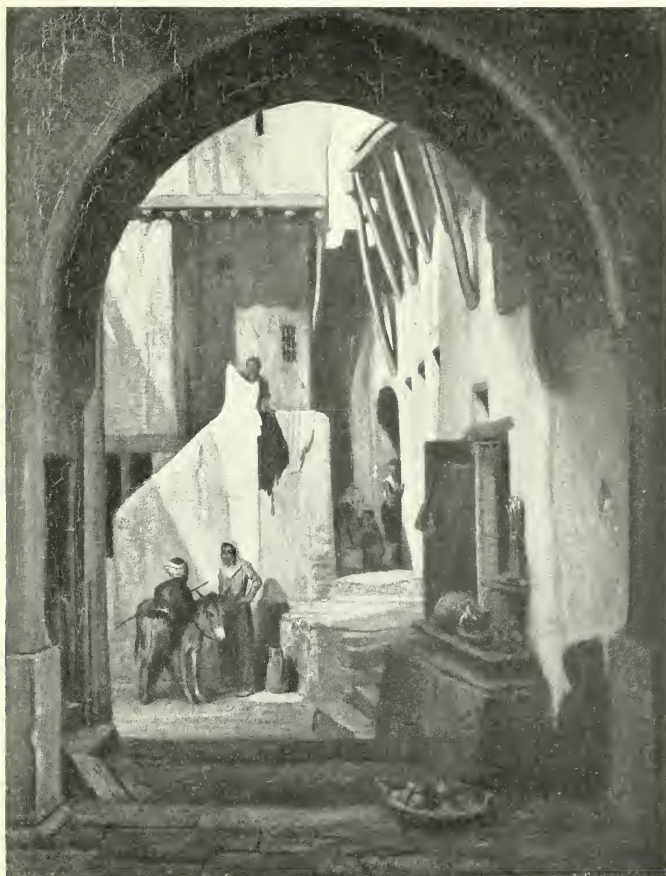
DECAMPS  
"LANDSCAPE  
IN  
ASIA MINOR"



FROM  
LITHOGRAPH  
BY J. LAURENS







DECAMPS  
"A STREET IN SMYRNA"  
THE LOUVRE

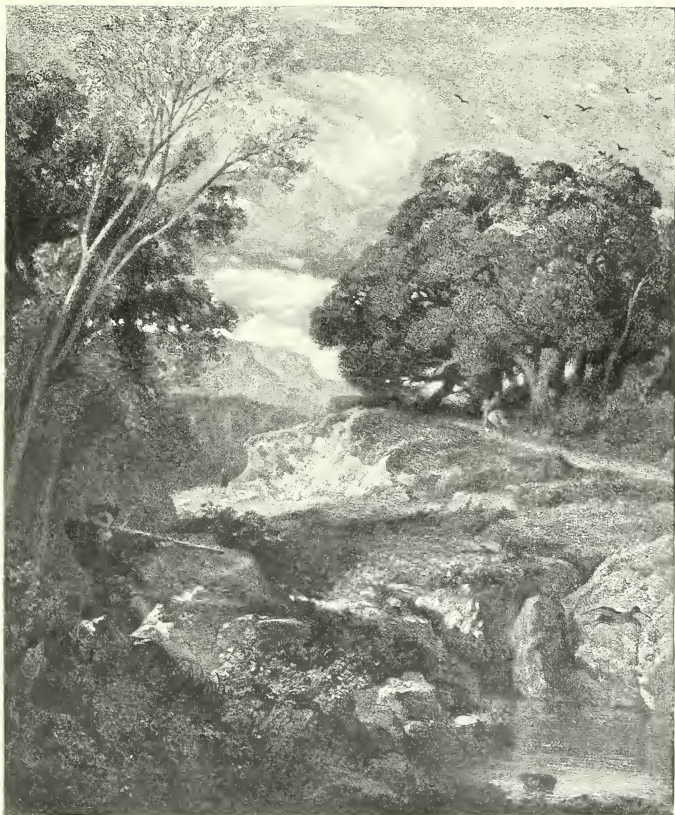






DECAMPS  
"ITALIAN SUBJECT"  
FROM LITHOGRAPH BY C. NANTEUIL





DECAMPS

“LE CHASSEUR”

FROM LITHOGRAPH BY FRANÇAIS



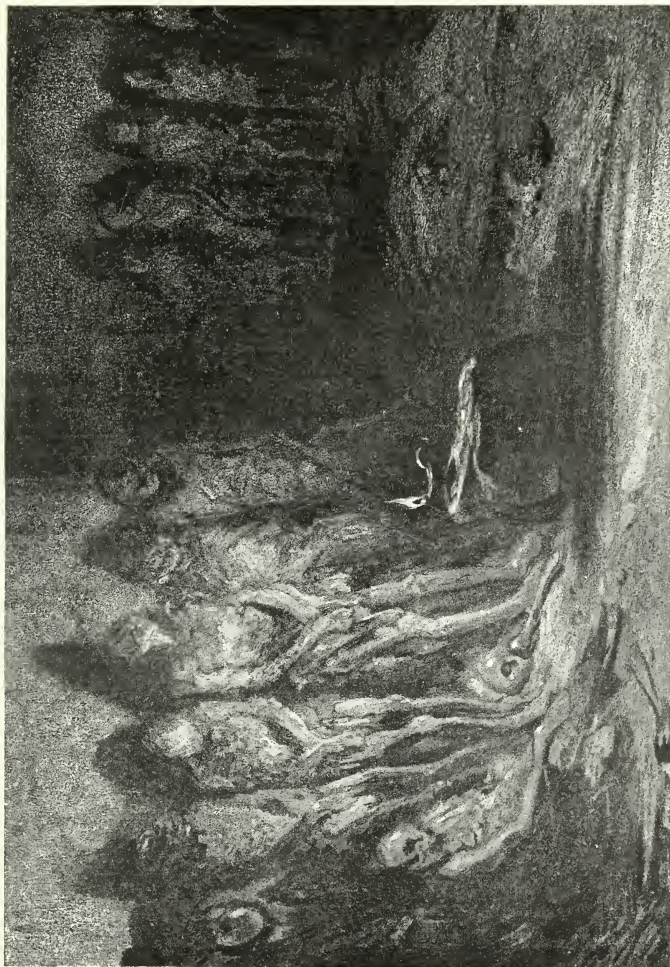


DECAMPS: "LA SORTIE DE L'ÉCOLE TURQUE"

THE LOUVRE







DECAMPS: "THE TOWER OF BORDEAUX"

FROM LITHOGRAPH BY EUGÈNE LE ROUX





DECAMPS  
"PORTE DE FERME"

NOW IN THE COLLECTION OF JOHN W. SIMPSON  
(FROM A LITHOGRAPH)







DECAMPS  
"THE  
WITCHES"

FROM  
LITHOGRAPH  
BY  
EUGÈNE  
LE ROUX





DECAMPS; "THE CROSSING OF THE FORD"  
THE LOUVRE







DECAMPS: "DEFEAT OF THE CIMBRI BY MARIUS"

FROM LITHOGRAPH BY EUGÈNE LE ROUX

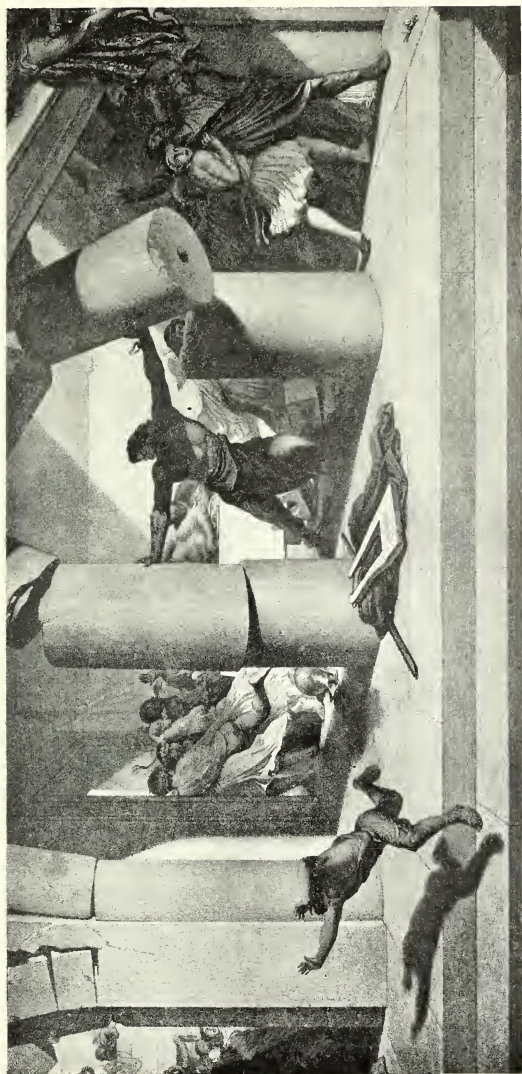


DECAMPS  
"JOSEPH  
SOLD BY  
HIS  
BRETHREN"



NOW IN THE  
COLLECTION OF  
JAMES J. HILL





DECAMPS

“ REVENGE AND DEATH OF SAMSON ”

FROM LITHOGRAPH BY EUGÈNE LE ROUX







DIAZ  
"DESCENT OF THE BOHEMIANS"  
BOSTON MUSEUM





DIAZ: "A POND IN FONTAINEBLEAU FOREST"

NOW IN THE COLLECTION OF PERRY BELMONT





DIAZ: "TURKISH WOMEN IN LANDSCAPE"

FROM LITHOGRAPH BY J. LAURENS





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art; and it was unjust, of course, to Rousseau. We know that he was not a copyist. That he had in so far to copy, because he fell in love with each theme, one after the other; he was simply in love with the mother earth; everything was precious to him; everything was worth rendering; but he still had the love of the old masters, the love of that good sense which feels strongly that form has to be given to one's imagination. I only quote the saying as a mark of how, in the first place, Rousseau was antagonised; how Diaz was loved anyhow, by anyone, all through, and never an object of jealousy. The explanation is evident, and it is painful to think that a man of some importance like Couture could demean himself in teaching the wrong thing to a pupil, and a pupil in whom he believed.

As I have said, all these things are more or less charming, being more or less anything. Nymphs, Dianas, Venuses, women bathing, cupids and children, and every variety of real or imaginary costume, Oriental subjects (because they could be made splendid), all these are subjects of this fascinating nonsense. And as it is nonsense, there is no suggestion of harm in the nudest images or most mythological subjects that he ever painted. He might have introduced a murder—he would if it would have sold—but nothing is in the least harm-



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ful in anything that he ever painted. In fact there seems to have been nothing in the man's mind which was not kindly and generous.

These pretty objects were sought on every hand, by the dealers, and the actresses and actors, bankers and bankers' wives, by all connected with the stock-market, as they call it, as well as by other artists and graver students. And occasionally when this man has felt like bestowing much time and attention on these little treasures, they have the similitude of great work and are lessons also in the possibilities of painting.

Once only and at the end, possibly out of good nature, out of the love for his fellow-artists, out of the love for what he hoped was a nice ambition, perhaps also to pay off a mortgage on the house, because he spent money and lived nicely, he painted certain things which were more tawdry, which were thinner, which were weaker were less valuable in every way than those in which he had attempted nothing. This is almost an approach to some of his monetary affairs. There is a look as if he had attempted to be still more pleasing to others and said: "Well if you like 'spirits,' like these things, I too can do it. It is no more difficult."

There is little more to say about him except to insist

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upon the help which he extended to those fellow-artists whom we are considering, and who often needed a more practical mind, some one to help them in their business relations, for which they were less fitted than this sensible man. He had retired in 1856 to Barbizon, had also a house near the sea, and died of some form of consumption in 1876, with the great regret of painters as different as Meissonier and Dupré, who were his pall-bearers. Dupré, always a silent man, had been silent during the funeral; he said as he left: "The sun has lost one of its most beautiful rays."



## FIFTH LECTURE

*With Rousseau and Dupré we touch the reasons of the name of the Barbizon school. They are essentially landscape painters. Corot influenced by the "human form divine." Rousseau's origin and education: the latter a poor one. He with the others, Dupré for instance, feels early the influence of the earlier masters. The Dutch, the Italians. These young men appeared to be revolutionists, being very conservative. All the more they were opposed. Extreme sincerity and simplicity of Rousseau. His wish to represent the entirety of his sight and still to be within the limit of conventional art—what we call a picture. His saying that he would have liked to devote himself to the creation of one sole and unique painting.*

*Analogies of Dupré, his friend, and of Daubigny. The record of all these men is a lesson to students in this, that the consideration of great artists as representatives of problems, puts aside the idea of imitation of formulæ.*

## FIFTH LECTURE

**Y**OU will remember that in our last lecture we were still in the division of the precursors, of the teachers and founders of the general direction to which the name of Barbizon school has been given. It is almost a pity that that name should be continued by habit, and if it were possible to break it we would have a more reasonable and also in reality a more poetic form of nomenclature. With the men of whom I shall speak to-day we come more distinctly into the reason of this misnomer. With the names of Rousseau and Dupré we touch more closely the reasons which give to our group of painters the name of the Barbizon school. These two men are essentially landscape painters, with no influence of the human figure in their work, such as we feel in Corot, for instance, who, by the by, became a wonderful painter of the human figure.

I mean by the influence of the human figure, not only the mere question of the introduction of the human figure as part of the picture, or as a recall, somehow or other of the school, or as a recall to art of the same

## FIFTH LECTURE

kind that exists in the pictures, I mean that particular influence which study of the human body gives to the artist. It should permeate in reality his entire work. It fits, somehow or other, the work to the scale of man. The curves become those of the body, or those that the body describes. Thereby, perhaps, it is a more logical, a more reasonable, a more philosophic proportion than the mere abstract look at outside Nature, which is perhaps too much akin to the view of the photograph. It is of no consequence to us that the view which the artist takes of Nature should be unprejudiced. We do not ask that of him. On the contrary, we wish him to be prejudiced as much as he can make it beautiful or advantageous to be so. If he is prejudiced he has an inheritance, and his inheritance cannot be too rich. It is the part of him which he does not know of, which is the important part. The part he knows of, his training, his reasoning, the result of his studies, are rather the rudder, the governing machine of what he does.

Now in Corot, for instance, we have a view of Nature which is constantly steeped in that peculiar influence inseparable from the love of the human form. That is to say, he is a composer, a builder of proportion, even though the apparent record is only that of a landscape at a given time of day.



## FIFTH LECTURE

I have to refer to other men, but you know all these men, you know them all, you have them here in this very building, you have them in the city. If you move to any of our great cities you have them again. The shops have them, the imitations of them; forgeries fill galleries and shops throughout the world, especially with these three or four names, Rousseau, Dupré, Corot, Daubigny.

With Rousseau the love is not of the human form divine—it is of earth and its growth, and comes from the impression made by outside Nature, and a desire to conquer it and carry it away. It is a sort of answer in full, and perhaps the most complete we can have, notwithstanding its great limitations, to a question asked of me by a child—one of my own children, now grown up, a scholar, a thinker—concerning his other brothers, who were all natural artists, who liked to copy, who liked to draw, who liked to keep continually some reference to what they saw, in their minds, or with the pencil on paper. He said to me, using a form of question very much such as the Greeks made years ago: “Why do you and why do my brothers copy these things? They already exist in Nature. Is it necessary to make a copy which must necessarily be bad?” This was the view of a boy of twelve years old, and is naturally the absolute criticism of what we call realism, if such a thing as

## FIFTH LECTURE

realism ever existed. But it is impossible. The photograph even has its fits. The photograph even is not quite steady in its mind. The photograph varies a little. The photograph is sentimental at times, it is inaccurate at least. It does some things it ought not to do. There is no realism and never can be except in the mind.

Now the answer to my little boy's question is what Rousseau did; and it began also with the boy Rousseau—this love of out-of-doors. At the early age of twelve he was secretary to the proprietor of a saw-mill in the forests of Franche Comté. His employer was a relative. He failed in business and the boy returned home to school; but having shown by some early attempts at painting an extraordinary desire and capacity, the family allowed a cousin, a landscape painter of whom we know a little, to begin his training, under a teacher perhaps as far removed as could well be from what was really to be the view of nature expressed by Rousseau. He was taught a certain curious formalism which existed in the early part of the nineteenth century, and which probably can never exist again. All the problems that affect the modern mind were skipped; the problems of light, of what we called 'values' yesterday, of form, of real construction. He was taught what is called drawing, that is to say, what is usually and foolishly called

## FIFTH LECTURE

drawing—the following of an edge of some kind, say the edge of a form, and the representation of anything by some agreeable trick. We have yet the same fault, but it is dignified by some painters through the extreme difficulty of so doing it, the representing the thing by the touch of the brush. The touch of the brush is so difficult when it comes to be a very successful thing, that it becomes ennobled. The touch of the little lead pencil which the boy learned was nothing but a movement to right or left, without any implication of form. I went through that myself as a small boy, at no great distance from the date of this man Rousseau, when I was taught to draw by a teacher of the eighteenth century, brought up in the eighteenth century, who had the eighteenth-century habit, and if he had studied later would have begun the nineteenth century. Our teaching of landscape was absolutely perfunctory. It was very pretty; it had quite a little ideal of its own, there was something behind it, but it was merely a touch which represented this or that. But one cannot argue about these things. The touch used in another way, as it is in Japan, is the result of long study by a great many very great men, and is of sufficient difficulty to be in itself a matter of long study, and in itself also a matter of education.

Rousseau's father was a clothier in moderate circum-

## FIFTH LECTURE

stances. Rousseau was born in 1812. The family had for a long time some connection with art. An uncle had been a portrait painter, and a portrait painter with some faint talent, at least with some proof of character and of romantic disposition. His mother's cousin was the artist who first directed the boy's study. Rousseau's explanation of himself is that his first teaching was so bad that its spectre pursued him for years. But, however, while a boy and up to his seventeenth year, he seems to have played truant most of the time, and made continuous but timid attempts to express what he was beginning to see. That is to say like the usual boy that you know. The boy of eighteen broke away from the wishes of his teacher, anxious to have him prepare for the career of a reputable official artist by competing for the Roman prize. In the mountains of Auvergne he began certain studies which to his official friends were monstrous, but which brought him the good-will of some of the more important men of the new movement, and among others the influential artist, Ary Scheffer. The young man then became one of the new movement with which he had really little connection, apart from that sentiment of natural opposition to the government, the Government Institute, hatred of the Academy and its narrowness, and a willingness to believe that all the

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new ideas were really his. Really they were not, yet the youth's entanglement with men of revolutionary and socialistic leanings stood later in his way, and served as an excuse for a continuous opposition on the part of representatives of government teaching, which lasted almost to the end of his meritorious and independent career. This was largely based on untruthful allegations. It embittered many moments of Rousseau's later life, and made him even suspicious at times of friends who were in reality his faithful helpers and champions. I only know by hearsay and by a few hints of these facts of his connection with the more advanced ideas of that time, but he withdrew from them so completely that, as it were, the traces had been obliterated. Some of his champions—and of course they encouraged his enemies—some of his champions attempted to connect him, as they did others, with socialistic ideas, with communistic ideas more properly, in one of the movements which go on forever of making art a mere expression of certain tendencies at certain moments. Rousseau and his friends were to be representatives of the new way of thinking, of a new social form of government, a new social form of life, of which I only knew in the way that we all know, and with which we sympathised more or less. But on the contrary, now that the storm is over, now that the

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literary men's work is only a curiosity, we know that these painters of ours represent a form—the steadiest form—of conservatism in what they did. The young man was already, in 1833, a prominent person, fought over by writers on art, who delighted in introducing their social and political questions into the peaceful domain of æsthetics. Anything will do for a stone; anything will do for a thing to sling with. Rousseau's first celebrated picture, "*La Descente des Vaches*," is a picture which to-day is almost gone, owing to many imperfections of execution. You remember what I said about the execution of the men of the middle of the nineteenth century being really bad, because it passed over the fundamental reasons that make oil painting, and was detached from the experience of the eighteenth, seventeenth, sixteenth, fifteenth, and fourteenth centuries. This picture made a great sensation. It was refused at the Exposition of 1836. It was defended and admired by critics and artists, established the reputation of the painter to all of the greater men of the day, and brought him the friendship and good-will of such men as Ary Scheffer, Delacroix, Decamps, Barye, and Dupré, but increased still more the opposition of the men of the Institute. Probably the Institute saw further than these other men did—saw the danger of bringing back



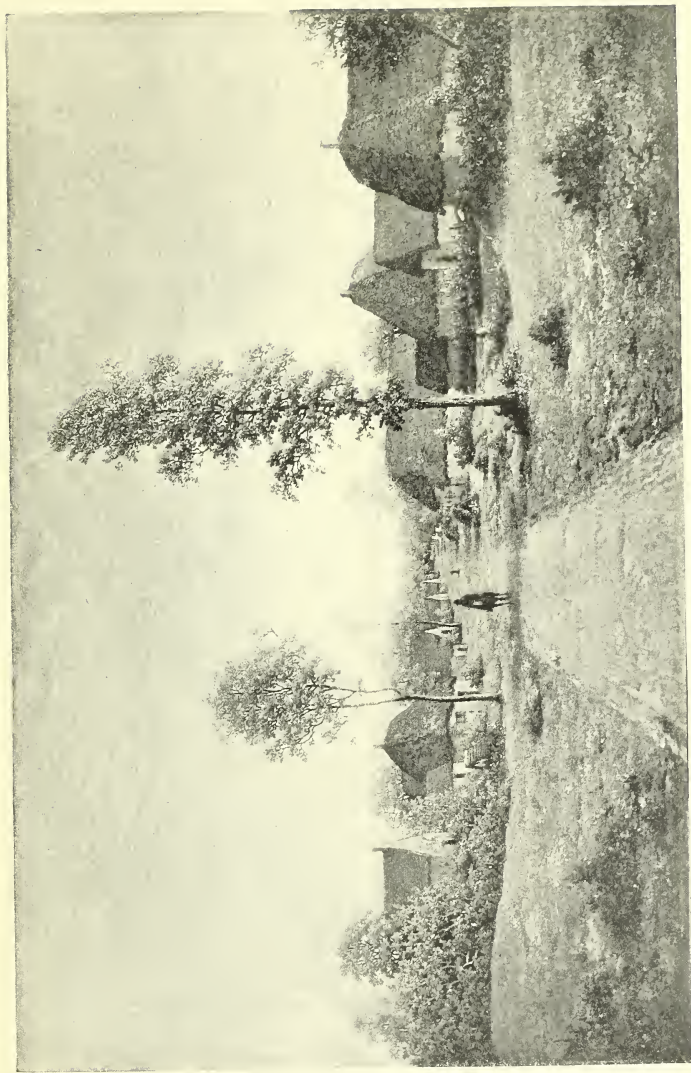
## FIFTH LECTURE

the real past, that is, the past of ages from which one can get greater, wider and more liberal inspiration than from the narrower past just behind us. They saw behind some of these new artists the Dutch school and the poetry of Rembrandt. They saw the early Italians, they saw the evidences of tone, the value of what would be impressionism later, of everything that they hated most. They saw the formulæ of Nature and not the formulæ of composition. Our young men were revolutionists from being ultra-conservatives. They knew nothing of what they were doing in that way. They merely made the natural opposition that any one does by going on in his own way. All the more, therefore, did they suffer; all the more did they not understand. The painters Dupré and Rousseau began to work together, visiting together different parts of France, establishing a community of feeling and interest which was only once broken into by a jealous suspicion of Rousseau's. But there seemed to be always more clear and special opposition to him, beyond all the others who were in the movement not favoured by the Institute. Time and again his pictures, famous in history of art, were refused at the exhibitions, or, if accepted, then they were badly hung, and such honours as were granted to others were refused to him. Money matters naturally were also difficult, until a later



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moment, 1851, when the tide had begun to turn and Rousseau was able to earn a living and enjoy for some time a commercial success. He was then able to help his friends, purchasing under another name, for instance, Millet's salon picture of 1855. His commercial success later was even mingled with the curious handling of his pictures as of merely commercial value, in the same way that we see in stocks. One of the great firms bought Rousseaus to sell low and put them in the market below the price at which they had obtained them so as to make an opposition to the other dealers who handled, naturally, the Rousseaus for a rise. Opposition to Rousseau took even the form of his pictures as I say, being bought at higher prices. These fluctuations in his means involved Rousseau in financial difficulties for which his temperament was of course not fitted. His was the temperament of a dreamer, not at all the man described by some of his political friends as a reformer, as a person engaged in general ideas; no, he was purely and absolutely a painter, a dreamer, a man in love with certain things he had seen. And his living in solitude, and in a state of opposition and intellectual struggle brought on an irregularity of habit of work, which is singular, perhaps, in the career of one of the most strenuous and sincere of artists at any time. He occasionally painted



ROUSSEAU: "UNE ALLÉE DE VILLAGE" (Village of Bequigny)

NOW IN THE COLLECTION OF GEORGE J. GOULD



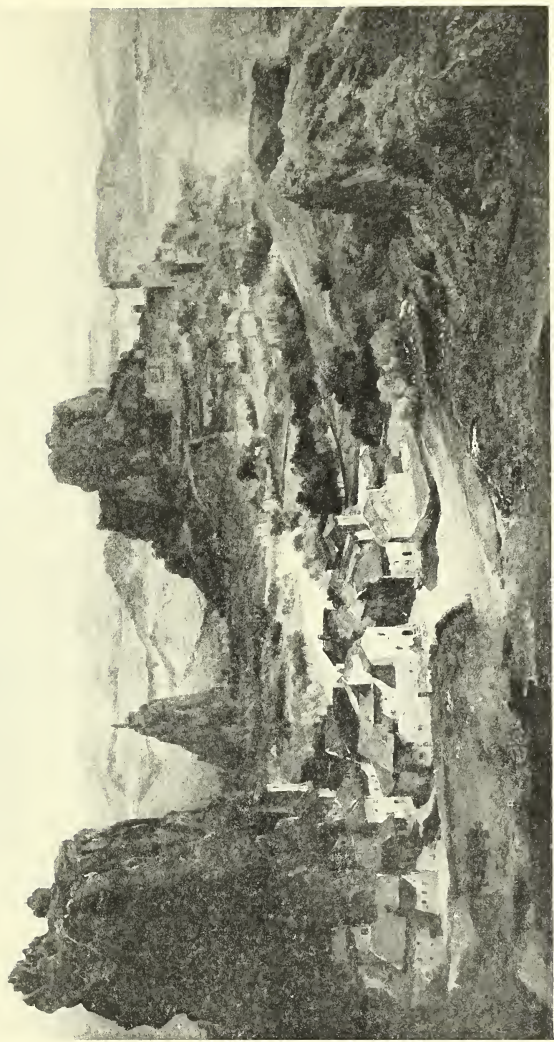


ROUSSEAU: "SUNSET—FOREST OF FONTAINEBLEAU"

NOW IN THE COLLECTION OF P. A. B. WIDENER







ROUSSEAU: "LE PUY"

NOW IN THE J. J. HOAGLAND COLLECTION





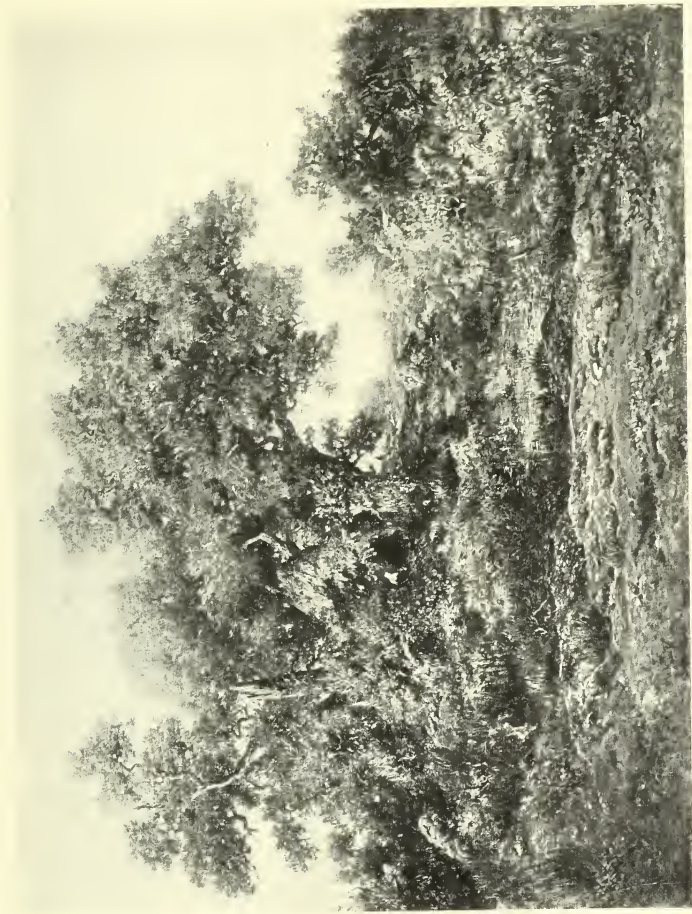
ROUSSEAU  
"IN THE  
FOREST"

UNFINISHED PICTURE  
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VAN HORNE



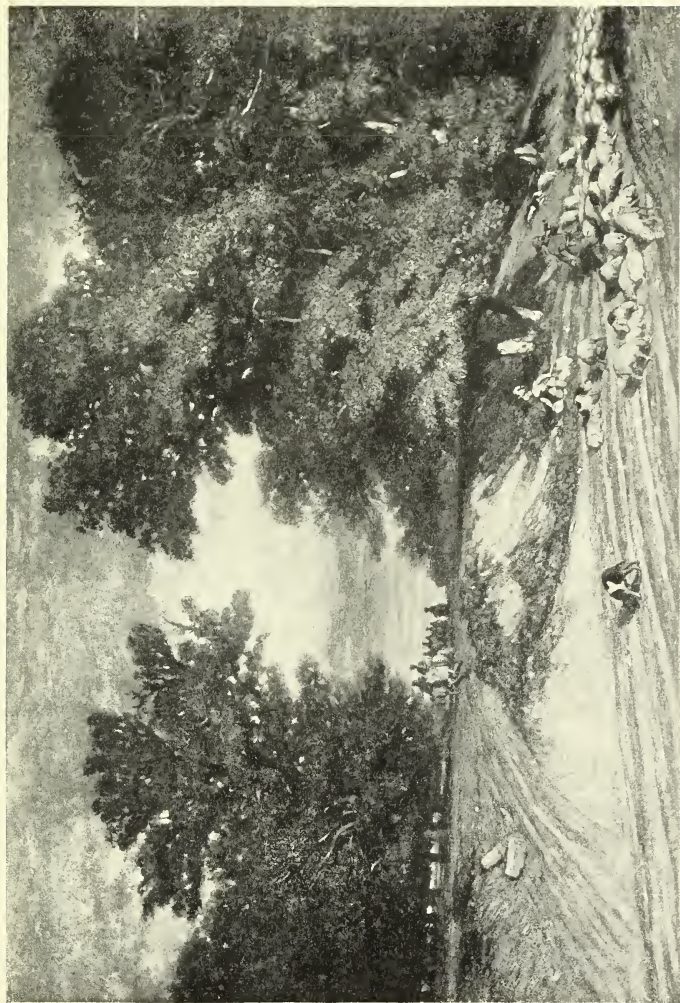


ROUSSEAU  
"THE  
CHARCOAL  
BURNERS'  
HUT"



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DUPRÉ: "ILLUSTRATION TO SIR WALTER SCOTT"

NOW IN THE WILLIAM H. VANDERBILT COLLECTION





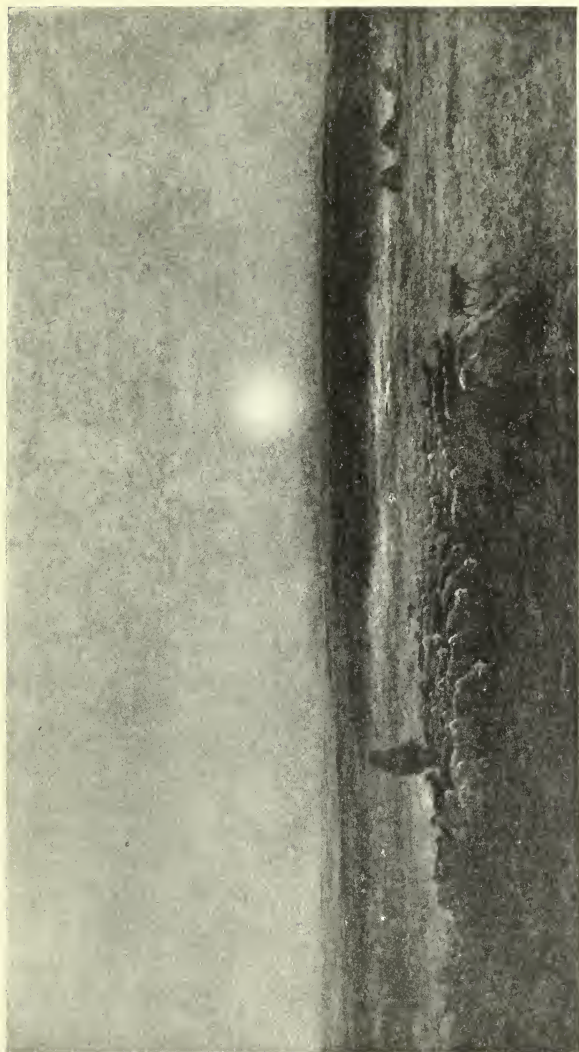
DUPRÉ  
"ON THE ROAD"



NOW IN THE  
CHICAGO ART  
INSTITUTE



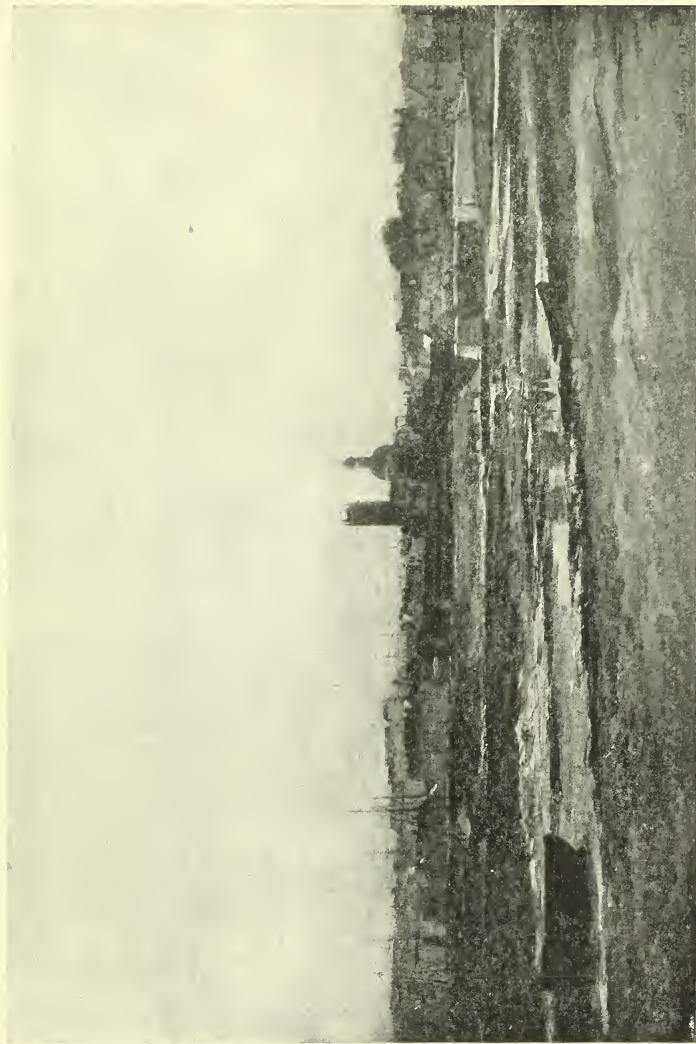




DAUBIGNY: "MOONLIGHT"

NOW IN THE COLLECTION OF SIR GEORGE DRUMMOND, MONTREAL

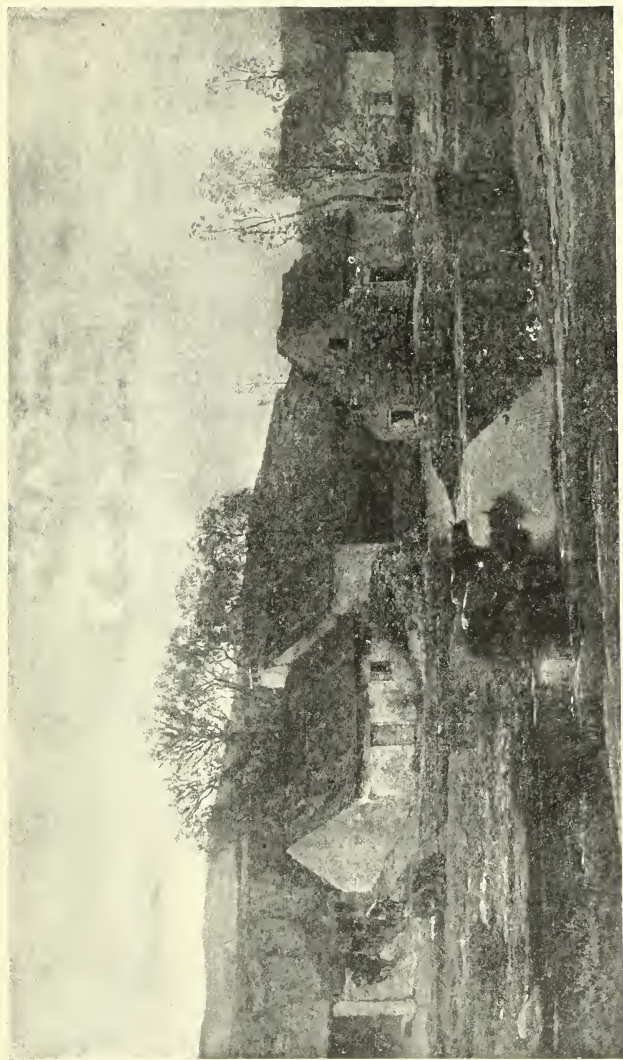




DAUBIGNY : "DIEPPE"

NOW IN THE COLLECTION OF HENRY C. FRICK





DAUBIGNY: "THE MILL AT GOBELLE"  
NOW IN THE COLLECTION OF WILLIAM L. ELKINS





## FIFTH LECTURE

pictures which were nothing but the result of much knowledge, and were understood receipts, not differing from ever so many of the fairly great men, and then again, putting aside all questions of interests, of his money interests, he attacked new problems of extreme difficulty, spending months, extending into years, for elaboration, rehandling, and changing the problems.

He is known to have absolutely painted in a new way works which were already among the most remarkable studies of Nature that modern art has given. One case that I recall was caused by his sudden introduction to the question brought up by the ordinary little Japanese prints that you know, the extreme luminosity obtained by a few flat, clear colours, and by their relation one to another, so that the mere quality of the tone and its belonging to one or other of what we call divisions of what we call colour, that is to say, that a red, placed in a sky of a certain value, not too deep, is forced at once into the background and into being a sky by a certain blue which comes against it. There is nothing concealed or involved—anybody can see it as it were—there is no trick in it. It is a scientific statement. There it is. Somehow or other you see that the pink sky involves the opposition of blue as a perpendicular against it, and the thing is solved with no modelling, or modelling so slight

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that it is not worth speaking of, and there it is. And a man like Rousseau has spent months, years, of hard work, of modelling, of darkening, of lightening, of every trick that he knows of to produce something as good, or not quite so good as this thing, realised in Japan by a naked man seated on a mat and daubing a little wet water colour on a block. There is enough herein to make a man of the temperament of Rousseau (an investigator, an analyst) pause and become frightened. Would it be possible to paint with that simplicity in his material, oil? Would it be possible to use these evident secrets? Would it be possible to bring them into what he was doing? It was not. The question was too large in reality and he merely spoiled for a time some of the things he was at work on. The later painters, as you know, immediately afterward began to take up questions of a similar kind, and since then up to the present movement we have had the struggle to represent light by colours, by an arrangement of colours, an opposition of colour, a concatenation of colour.

Rousseau had undertaken, as it were, a personal struggle with Nature, a wish to transfer absolutely into the space of a frame all the characteristics of Nature which he saw before him: the solidity of the ground, the growth of plants and trees, the complications of foliage,

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the infinite tapestries of weeds and grass, the hardness of rock, the softness of marsh, the flow of water, its transparency, its reflection, the play of the clouds over the scene, their make, their lights and shadows, and the sunlight or cloudiness that drops through all this vegetation, lighting here and there, logically this more than that, and yet also to have the view, not a piece cut out from the panorama, but a little world complete in itself, with the optical modulations which our eyes make and which constitute a picture and not a mere study. That is to say that Rousseau's struggle was a dual one. It was to take up the work of the great masters of the past who painted pictures, that is to say, little worlds, and to introduce into these new creations all that he could gather together of the infinite facts which make the world we see. Hence perhaps, there is too much in many of his pictures, but it is not too much of a mere record, of a mere catalogue, of an addition of facts put in because they were there; it is that less than what he put in would be sufficient, and that in a struggle with all the difficulties of representing Nature, the man must be, to a certain extent, defeated. But the cause of this deficiency or failure in Rousseau's work is not to his discredit. It is a form of overconscientiousness. If we had his portrait here I think you would see it in his

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face, and this very defect gives to his work a relative solemnity when compared with that of his great friend Dupré, whom he touches so closely, and Decamps, who is more nearly a recorder of Nature, as already seen, a student unwilling to thrust into the pictures before him problems that have belonged to other sights already matured, or yet to be studied. The question of possible problems came to Rousseau's mind as he went along. He repainted a completed work to place before himself a new difficulty unthought of before when he was beginning the painting. He laboured for years over a picture in the anxiety of making it one final expression of the subject. It seems—I am thinking back—it seems to me as much as eight years in one case I remember. He explained to a remonstrating friend that what he would have wished would have been to devote himself to the creation of one sole and unique picture, to devote himself to it, to take all his delight in it, to suffer for it, to enjoy it, until, content with his work after years of trial, he should be able to sign it and say: "There my powers end, and there my heart stops beating." The rest of his life he said would be passed in making, drawing, or sketching pictures for amusement, which he would throw, like flowers, at the foot of the work with which he would be satisfied. There were times

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therefore when Rousseau could sell nothing, and was again in the straits of poverty and anxiety. Creditors pressed him, and the perpetual uncertainty of his wife's mental health, threatening a separation to which he would not consent, while he insisted that he could not take his own respite at the expense of her feelings.

Meanwhile he continued his career, which became more and more successful, but which was to end fatally in the middle of triumph, and owing again to the opposition of the government artists. In 1867 he had realised a great position, was selling his pictures for a great deal of money, had received the gold medal, was elected president of the jury of the great International Exhibition of 1867, where, however, he of all the jurors and all the exhibitors representing the mass of the world, was excluded from the foreordained compliment, a promotion in the Legion of Honour. He felt the blow more than it deserved. As I said before he had become suspicious of many of his friends; he had also believed that fame would free him from the persistent malice of the government school. He fell ill with something like a form of paralysis and died the same year, December, 1867.

It is difficult to disentangle Dupré from Rousseau, and in this case the name of the Barbizon school is

## FIFTH LECTURE

justified—that is to say, a union of methods of work as well as of intention. How much one got from the other, what would have happened if they had not met and formed a manner of partnership with each other it is difficult to say to-day.

Perhaps at times one feels the work of Dupré to be less of a separate creation and more of a study, but this is only at times, for there are many cases in which he, Dupré, is very decidedly the painter of a subject. Whatever the differences may be, his life is inseparable from that of Rousseau. He was born in 1812, therefore he was the same age as Rousseau. He was the son of a manufacturer of porcelain near Nantes. He learned something of his father's and brother's business, and not unnaturally was taught something about painting from the one point of view of the workman, which we all ought to consider an excellent one. He came to Paris almost a boy, and seems to have had his future determined by his acquaintance with Cabat, who was of his own age and also an apprentice decorator. They had seen together the pictures of the Louvre, where Cabat was copying, and this determined Dupré's desire to become an artist beyond the stretch of his usual work on mere plates. Some help he got outside, but certainly the acquaintance with Cabat, who is a real precursor also,



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is sufficient to have placed the foundations of serious study. And there were others. There was a precursor of pre-Raphaelism: Delaberge, there was Huet, who might be described as the painter of a general impression, and there was Diaz coming, and I have to skip a dozen names which belong to the friends and acquaintances of these young men, so that the boy of nineteen appeared with sufficient importance in the great Salon of 1837, alongside of great names. In a few years he was in England and must have been affected by the English school, some few of whose works made a great impression on the younger French artists. Delacroix, as you know, not only felt this influence, but had deliberately studied the methods of the English painters with a view to connect again through them with a past that no longer existed on the Continent. This English residence brings the painter's life to 1836, and then toward 1840 he had become more intimate yet with Rousseau. They painted in adjacent studios after excursions into various parts of France. At some moments in their acquaintance Rousseau's more suspicious mind doubted, as we know, Dupré's services, and a coolness of some duration ensued. The basis of this misunderstanding was the difficulty Rousseau had always found in the reception of his works by the management



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of the government Exposition called the Salon, and the withholding of any government honours. About this time Dupré seems to have retired from public exhibitions for a term of years ending toward 1852, but his importance was duly recognised and he seems almost alone of the men so far mentioned to have lived in circumstances allowing him to pursue his art freely and to help the men he cared for, notably Rousseau. The steadiness of his career leaves little to say. He was one of the last survivors of the men classed under the name of the Barbizon painters, living until 1889 in a reputation solidly established and recognised.

And a career of still greater evenness is that of Charles Francis Daubigny. He was born in 1817, was the son of a drawing-master who had studied under Bertin, the representative, classical formulist landscape painter, a manner of formal painting that you hardly know unless, perchance, you have been abroad. It is difficult to define, being merely an abstract between a cheap form of composition and the early influences of the past—the eighteenth century and the seventeenth century—the great paintings of Claude and others. So that vaguely there is a little reminiscence, a slight something, like a schoolgirl's analysis of "Paradise Lost." An uncle and aunt were successful miniature painters, so that the

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boy began his life, as he ended it, under the influence of the studio. When a child he was much in the country as a remedy for delicate health, and became acquainted with the land he painted later. As a youngster he supported himself, learned etching and engraving, and put aside enough money to allow him and a friend to go to Italy. It is true he went on foot, but all the better for what they saw and enjoyed. He returned on foot also and, like himself, still having money in his pocket. He helped to restore the pictures in the Louvre and apparently lost his place by expressing an opinion as to the propriety of some of the repairs he was asked to do. He managed to visit Holland and admire the old painters, and on his return made many friends among artists of various temperaments. He even attempted to get the Roman prize, and seems to have been disqualified by a technical rule, namely, not having attended school the day before the examination. This absolutely threw him out. One may wonder what would otherwise have happened with so easy going and plastic a nature, which was also a sensitive one. His missing the Roman prize turned him to the study of outside Nature in the free way we have now learned to accept as being the only possible way; but he kept to his engraving as a means of support, and made his painting his ambition, his

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pleasure, his glory. The simplicity of mind with which he looked at things has made his pictures stand well alongside of the more powerful men with whom he sympathised. For they are more like studies, that is, like the representations of the pleasure he took in certain scenes. They might often be pictures but they are very often slices cut out of Nature. And in that way he departs somewhat from his friends whose names live with us. All those that we have named are builders of pictures, and yet one bond unites them, a great love of Nature and a certain reaching out of the hands back to the greater art of the past. As Daubigny etched and engraved continuously, one sees in these smaller matters the use for his independence. As he attempted greater ones he entered more and more necessarily into the idea of the deliberate work of art; but the charm lies greatly in his fluidity, in his acceptance of very many different intentions, so that he is hard to define from the absence of any strain of intention in his career. As we have seen, he prospered, was able to provide for his people, and at the end of his life to paint just as he liked. General friendship and good-will and admiration surrounded him. He died in 1878, leaving Dupré the last representative of the group.

For my next lecture I propose to take up Corot, who

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is a very large figure, not only by what he has done himself but by all that he implies. Perhaps I shall resume somewhat what I have already said, and explain to you how the consideration of these men (who are necessarily a part of yourselves as far as you do anything in the way of painting), how far knowing them, looking at them separately and analysing them—may be of use to you. I think that the consideration of greater artists as representatives of problems, puts aside, or may help to put aside, from the younger man the idea of mere imitation, the idea of using them in a cheap way, as a formula, which, if their souls could penetrate ours, would probably be the last insult that they could obtain. For one thing above all else they did, and that was to protest all their lives against a doctrine of mere form.



**SIXTH LECTURE**

*Millet separates more entirely from the general intentions of the artists we are considering. In Corot we have also a distinct separation in that, during the failures or successes of others, Corot was forming a style for himself which was to appear newer, but which was, in reality, the result of a desire to retain the teachings of the past, and also naturally to represent external nature in some moods which had no previous interpreter. Corot, leaving trade, begins painting not early in life. His strong body and good nature well inherited carried him thankfully through life. Recognition of his work very slow. He studies in Italy, and in reality never separates from its lessons and influence. The human form he is always in sympathy with, in contradiction with most landscape painters. His study that way influences all his work; and as we shall see he becomes an extraordinary figure painter outside of landscape. But in his landscapes the figures are at ease in a manner only approached by very few, as they are in Nature.*

*Explanations of these points; again a reference to the theatrical as opposed to the natural; and also to the recognition of the use of convention, not to be confused with the representation of Nature. The use of the frame. The bad technique of the painting of the last century. A summary of the values of the artists considered here. Dupré's large definition of their attitude. The encouragement to be derived from their works and lives.*



## SIXTH LECTURE

**I**N this last lecture I shall talk to you about Corot and probably say a few things of his relation to the other men whom we have chosen to connect with him under the name, the unfortunate name, of the Barbizon school. You know that Millet separates more entirely than any of them from the general intentions of the school, and in Corot we also have a very distinct separation. During the failures and successes of the other men of whom I have spoken, the landscape painter Corot was slowly forming a style for himself which was to appear much newer than the manners of these coeval artists and yet was the result of a similar desire to retain the teachings of the past in some especial ways, of which the artist was fond, and which happened to have had no previous interpreter. As he began late, somewhat obscurely and certainly modestly, Corot appears a younger artist than he was. In reality he was born in 1796, in what is known as the year 8, the eighth year of the foundation of the "one and in-

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divisible Republic" of France. Corot came of a good peasant stock of Burgundy, of which origin he was proud and from which he inherited, perhaps, the strong body and sturdy good nature which carried him thankfully through life, but this was not direct or near; for I am talking of the father of his grandfather. Corot's mother was a successful milliner, owning her house on a quay of the Seine, and his father was a thrifty tradesman. After the usual school days passed away from Paris in that charming city of Rouen, far down the great river Seine, the boy was employed in a draper's shop from 1812 to 1820, a disagreeable discipline, to which he attributed, however, his habits of order and regularity, so regular that he timed within three minutes each morning his appearance at his studio. When a boy he had made the acquaintance of a landscape painter of whom we know little, who is not worth insisting upon, and he had obtained some drawing lessons. He has recorded that in his earliest childhood he had fallen in love with Nature, with out-of-doors and with certain moods of Nature which he used to see in his hurried walks at dusk, by the big trees or by the side of the river, accompanied by his guardian, who himself was fond of solitude and took him to out-of-the-way places in walks. When the time came that the boy desired more than

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anything else in the world to become a painter, his father was able to give him a small annuity, and later his income was sufficient for his always modest needs. We have any number of anecdotes about Corot; there is one which explains the artistic mind, which was quoted to me first by a business friend with whom I was discussing the curious impracticability of the artistic temperament. Corot had reported to his employer that he had successfully sold a quantity of beautiful Lyons silk. He expected some acknowledgment, on the contrary the draper explained to him that there was no merit whatever in disposing of really excellent goods, the only real merit was to sell what was bad. Whereupon Corot perceived that this is exactly what an artist cannot do; and he decided to quit commerce. He obtained his father's consent for his career as a painter on what was to him a large annuity of three hundred dollars. He was over thirty when he first began to paint on the very day that his father freed him, going straight out-of-doors and painting near the shop. He used to show that first picture of his to his friends, saying: "It is as young as ever; it marks the hour and the time of day when I did it. But Mademoiselle Rose, who worked at my mother's, and who looked at me while at my work, and I—how do we stand it, and where are we?"

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He studied faithfully under the direction of his masters, who represented the school of the artificial, misnamed "classical" formula, in all its rigour. In 1825 he went to Rome to carry out still further this mode of study, but curiously enough began there to study for himself in exactly the opposite manner to the way inculcated, without probably feeling in the recesses of his mind that he was contradicting what he had been told. He made rapid notes of everything that moved, that was transitory and different from the posing of the studio. In that way he learned the difference between Nature on the wing, as it were, and that artificial combination of parts successfully adjusted, which is the usual foundation of the picture or the statue made in the studio. I cannot too much insist upon that. In every one of these talks I have in some form or other referred to it, and with these men of our talks the idea was so grounded and so natural that they were not aware of the exceeding difference they were making at the beginning of their career. I said "the usual foundation of the picture or the statue made in the studio." In talking with M. Rodin, the sculptor, when I first made his acquaintance some ten or twelve years ago, we agreed over this fact which had made me admire his work, though I had seen it only a few days before for the first time. The figures which

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he built were no abstract; even if they were alone. In groups they were related to each other all the way through. If the subject were but a single figure, that figure did not move in space but moved as if other human figures might possibly interfere or be present. Every being, as you see it go along (you yourself included), has a motion related to other beings or to the place it is in. This is not so of course on the stage, where the place is arranged for the stage walk and the stage gesture, or on the studio model stand with nothing to get in its way. Every part of two people walking together, or two animals rising, pulling or moving together, is influenced by their being in common, apart from the chance of meeting others, which is another complication. As an example you have but to look at photographs of people walking in the street.

Now that is at the bottom of the reasons why these men are a lesson. Not more than the great men of the past, perhaps not as much, but they are nearest to us, and thereby a little more visible, and we know more of their traits, and we know more of their methods, and we ourselves are to a certain extent part of them. You will remember how I insisted, but not enough, upon the point in Delacroix's "Women of Algiers" that these people moved or sat in reference to each other, in ref-

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erence to the place they were in. They can get up and change places and one almost feels that certainly they will do so. That is not what one sees in the very excellent and handsome pictures of French artists of the Institute when they paint original scenes. There the theatrical always prevails, and one cannot believe for a moment that each person is free to get up and spoil his "part." Of course all is fair in art, but we had better also see clearly what we are looking at, and not accept for realism what is really make-believe.

At the time that Corot turned his attention to such variations of Nature and stocked his unconscious memory with these movements of line, he retained that part of his training which obliged him to exercise firmness and precision, and his studies in that direction are still models of very complete observation. The first one that we saw on the screen reminds us of that, but of course you will have seen a certain number of those studies of Italy in which accuracy is evidently a great part of his intention. The work that he was doing was already a little beyond the average of school formulæ, though a few of the better artists of the classical school encouraged him, for which the kindly man was forever grateful.

In 1827 Corot began exhibiting regularly in the

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official exhibition which we call the Salon. He continued to the day of his death in 1875. If he was discouraged by being misunderstood, he was patient and he made no protest. The critics of the day passed over his work. He sold nothing, and the admiration of a few artists rather impressed upon the public that there was something mysterious and overæsthetic in his work. That we know ourselves from our own sad experience. It is only just now that Mr. Whistler, for example, the mysterious, seems more common property and not an extraordinary example of curiosity. The representatives, too, of official art were slow to understand that this man did not believe himself to be at all revolutionary, but was in fact a worshipper of all that they preached, but which, alas! he and they practised differently. With fifteen or twenty years of waiting some more open recognition came at length. Corot went again to Italy and carried out still further the direction of his studies. Then he began to be recognised, but was still considered strange. In 1847 he was made a Knight of the Legion of Honour, a form of acknowledgment which made his father increase the allowance of this man now past middle age.

More and more years passed on, and toward the end of the fifties Corot, while not triumphant, was



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known and even admired beyond the circle of his great admirers, the other men of whom I am talking. The new poetic feeling in his treatment of well-worn subjects began to be recognised, and the accuracy of impression of those of his paintings which seem mere records of Nature, was understood better and better by the many artists who had started out to conquer the different phases of out-of-door appearances. Further than any of them he carried the translation of special light and colour into what we call values, that is to say, the relation of light and dark of any place in the entire scope of the picture.

He was no longer an eccentric; he was a master, evidently capable of handling easily some of the most formidable problems that the painter meets. But it required still another decade to affirm this for every one, and perhaps even the next quarter of a century was necessary to place him, just before his death, in his secure position. Meanwhile he was looked at with friendly feeling and even with affection by all who knew him. His kindness to all who needed it, his sincere admiration for those who deserved it, the simplicity and serenity of his mind gave him a position free from all envy, and allowed those who stood in his way to forgive him more easily the harm they had done him. He was charitable

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and when he began to make money he at once helped others with it. As he said: "It all comes back again somehow."

In 1870, when he saw that the siege of Paris was inevitable, he returned to Paris to help in the ambulances and among the poor, spending what was a large sum for him, and yet managing even then to go on with his work as a consolation in those dark days. And he was happy in it (as his paintings show). He said to another painter a few hours before his death: "Truly, if my hour has come I shall have nothing to complain of. For fifty-three years I have been a painter. I have therefore been permitted to devote myself entirely to what I love most in the world. I have never suffered from poverty. I have had good parents and excellent friends. I can only be thankful to God." This was in the beginning of 1875. Corot therefore lived during the entire movement of the nineteenth century.

Only two of the men who belonged to his group outlived him—Dupré, who died in 1882, Daubigny dying in 1878. He belonged to them in so far that he was especially fond of Nature in all its aspects, though he more especially loved certain features of landscape which he saw more frequently and also certain kinds of days which seemed to him especially lovely. A letter of

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his, describing the delightful day of a landscape painter, tells just what he liked most. "He has watched for the dawn"; "Nature is behind a white veil, on which some masses of form are vaguely indicated. Everything smells sweet, everything trembles under the invigorating breezes of the dawn. The sun begins to rend the veil of gauze. The vapours of night still hang like silver tufts of cool green grass. The leaves feel cold and move to and fro in the morning air. Under the leaves the unseen birds are singing. It sounds as if the flowers were saying their morning prayers. We can see nothing, but the landscape is all there, all perfect behind the transparent gauze. The mist rises and rises and pales in the sun. And rising it discloses the river's silver scales, the meads, the trees, the cottages, the vanishing distance. We can distinguish now all that we divined before. The sun has risen, all things breaking forth into glistening and glittering and shining and a full flood of light, of pale, caressing light—as yet. The sun grows hot—we can see too much now. Let us go home."

The wet morning and the dewy eve, then, were what he painted most—and on that side of representing moments in Nature, he was closely affiliated to those of his day who were moving more and more toward realism. For all else he held on to the sequence of the greater

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masters of the classical past. It needs not for us to follow his choice of stories, his pleasant poetical legends in landscape, derived from what he saw about him, or remembered of Italy. The essence of those paintings, even when most veiled by the movements of light and shade, is the arrangement of light and the proportion of space. It is that which gives the strange recall of something which we have dreamed of, which we knew before. It is the recall of all the solemn dispositions of light and space which have come down to us from all time. In such landscapes he has placed figures under influences equally divided. They are placed as if they had been really seen; they have the look of realism very often, and they are so seen in that they are intimately associated with the space that holds them, with an accuracy far beyond that of the majority of the most accurate representations. They are so placed that they could move; they do not look as if the painter had chosen their position, but look as if he had only recorded what he saw, and at the same time in reality they are a part of the mechanism of the make-up of the picture which could not do without them.

In this matter, as in almost others of Corot's excellences, we have been slow to discover the wonderful art concealed under the appearance of that simplicity—

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what the French call “naïveté”—which belonged to Corot’s expression, as it was a part of his nature; which prevented his being taken as seriously as he might have been under more pompous formulæ, which allowed many to patronise him under the name of “Good Corot,” and of “Father Corot,” but which far down at the bottom was what might have been expected of that rich ancient Burgundian sap, which through peasant ancestry developed intense shrewdness under the forms of ironical indifference.

In the same way that the subtleness and completeness of his landscapes were not understood on account of their very existing, the extraordinary attainment of Corot in the painting of figures is scarcely understood to-day even by many of his admirers and most students. And yet the people he represents, and which he represents with the innocence of a Greek, have a quality which has skipped generations of painters and is not unlike what possibly a Greek sculptor might have tried to do if he had had no prejudiced habit of using the brush in too artificial a way.

How, when, and where Corot passed into the mastery of the figure I do not know—far back we know he noted and studied movement and pose and we have commented upon the singular, exceptional faculty he always showed

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for placing figures in his landscapes, which were there as they might have been in Nature, accidentally, and having followed, if one may so say, the movement of ground as if they were real beings.

And then many French painters, and perhaps others, have the excellent habit of painting from the figure as an exercise, a daily gymnastic practice. And so Father Corot liked to continue his habit of studio study from the model whom he took as he or she might turn up. Most of them were vulgar little beings, and sometimes they are mere people painted in the studio, and sometimes they are nymphs or beings of higher nature challenging our memories of the most superior idealisation. The great Ingres would not look at the figures of Corot, but his great pupil Flandrin said of them: "They have something which specialists have never been able to put into theirs." Corot has explained somewhat the cause of this exceptional quality, exceptional among all painters of figures, by this account—he allowed his model to move as much as he or she liked. The models of his studio could do very much as they liked and move about as if in their own place. Some correct person having alluded to these liberties of some one of them, Corot answered: "Why it's exactly that restlessness that I like in that girl; I am not a specialist



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doing a thing piece by piece, my aim is to express life and therefore I need a model that shall not keep still."

And as you will see by the various studies, however careful they may be, however innocently the costume may be copied, however the appearance even of a portrait, the human being is alive and is going to move and has moved. Take the painting of the "Girl Reading," who is also walking gently; the observation of movement is so subtle it is difficult to understand why the figure does not look steady, nor would she in Nature. And sometimes the model passes into a life of poetry and romance and we have the "Bacchante," so called, still a model, but so completely a part of the landscape, so completely free from the suggestion of a study, or an imitation of prose, that the satyrs or nymphs or other figures of classical recall in the distance, seem as proper to the place as if the painter had really seen them and merely noted the fact that they were there. And yet it is only a model with a tambourine and a leopard's skin, and she is not any more troubled by her being half divine any more than she would have been in reality. And so, partly from great knowledge, and still more from simplicity of mind, this landscape painter that we know is the equal of very great men who have painted the fig-



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ure, even Rembrandt, or Van der Meer, or Poussin. But he is not like them, and in such paintings as the "Bacchante," or the other pictures of human beings whom he has seen in the light of classical antiquity, they are all by themselves as if the Greek figures of the sculptors had become coloured and breathed in the open air of this special place in which Corot has seen them.

And now to return to prose; it is worth your while to look at the portrait of the great caricature painter Daumier and to realise how the honesty of the other artist's soul is given by the artist whom we know to have been himself a straight-minded and honourable creature.

I should like to conclude with a few more general expressions concerning these men, concerning their resemblances and their differences, and perhaps to state again in other forms some of their doctrines, though, as I have pointed out continually, these men were conservative, were the direct inheritors of the past. They believed that they preached nothing but what had always been known, and their justification was that it was so. With Delacroix and Millet, whom I have to place under the insufficient title of the Barbizon School, we have seen a wish to express at times religious emotion and feeling. In each case, that of Delacroix and Millet, the

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form of expression is extremely different, but theirs is almost the last successful attempt. The church itself has scarcely any place at present for such expression. The religious feeling is permanent in man, but it must of course find a place and opportunity. The conditions of the last two centuries have not been favourable, and to-day's are more than doubtful. The other men of whom I write have certainly expressed their moral nature in their landscapes.

A story will give us the height of his thought and the deep feeling for human sentiments which filled the heart of the absent-minded dreamer. His statements were very sudden, as you may remember when he woke out of his astonishment to say something about Delacroix's work. This anecdote will give all of this in a few words. He was out with one of his students and they were working: the sun was going down and all the splendour of dying day was before the artists, the young man and the old one, both held by the feeling of the moment. The young man turned to Corot and said: "O Master! is not Nature beautiful?" "Yes very beautiful," said Corot, "but Saint Vincent de Paul is also beautiful. Beautiful, very beautiful." The old artist was thinking of the Sisters of Charity and his one work for the help of the sick and wounded, and the sense of comfort and help of the

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great Giver of Light brought up the feeling of thanks for the man who had devoted a long life to the help of the poor and afflicted.

One more word for you, the students of art I address among the others. There is another point about the study or knowledge of these men's works which will help you. You may not have noticed it externally, but you believe in it completely. As I say, you do not always realise that you believe it. It is this—that it is we who are judged by the work of art, and that the reverse is not true. In all that we have said and in any consideration of our artist's life at any time we come across the fact that his work is either appreciated or not by his nation or his surrounding. If he is great and applauded as with Michael Angelo, we laud the race and the nation and they remain forever adorned by this glory of appreciation. By the work of art then we judge them. If there be slow success, as with two or three of these men of ours who still wait for full recognition, you know that it is because their public was stupid and undeveloped, or ill-read, or provincial in some way or other and we judge that public by these works of art. And slowly the public in these cases has been educated.

Art is like a mirror and reflects. In fact, the French artists have a fierce studio-saying about the pictures

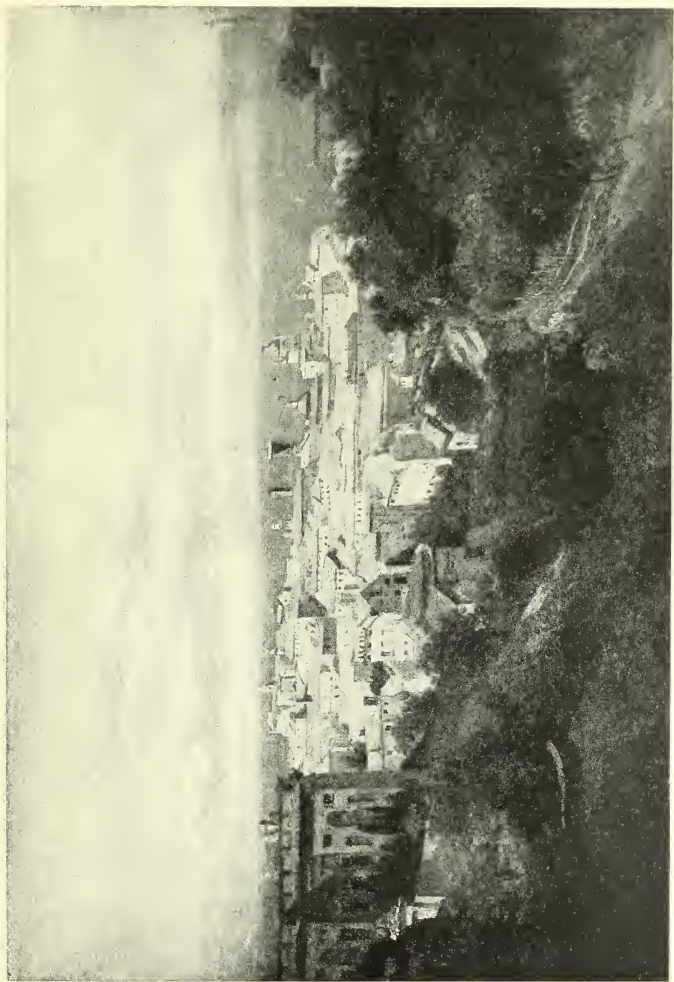
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of pretty women as mirrors; like the Bi Jin of the Japanese kakemono.

In the student or younger artist, therefore, the questions of patience and endurance may become the natural mode of life in which the artist must live if he wishes to achieve an intellectual existence of his own.

Nature to these men was not a thing to copy from, but in Dupré's wording—and it is a large wording—"their painting from Nature was an excuse for the statement of their capacity for reverence and admiration." These excuses they did not always find in the art about them and its representatives. They found about them, and perhaps to their surprise and official coldness, a military dogmatism in church and state; and in France especially, the church had little to do but what the state granted, even in art. But the state long ago had laid its hand on art, as on everything that it could regulate. The military organisations of Napoleon reached after him into the domain of art and literature, and the great educational mechanisms of France are the means of controlling the powers which in their essence are the freest function of man.

By the management of state patronage a hierarchy is established which holds the farthest removed in some manner of control by those chosen by the state. Conse-

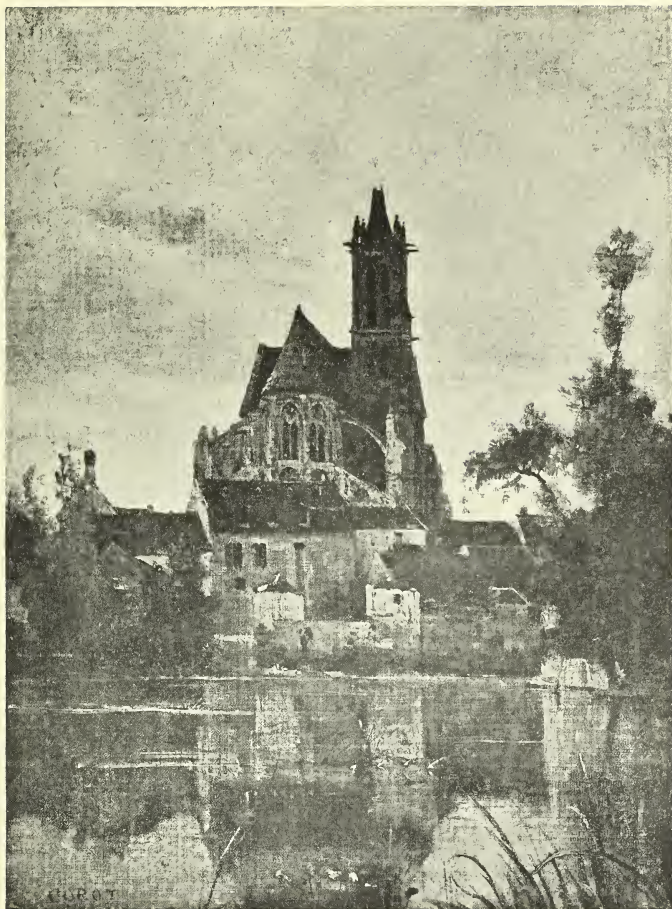


COROT: "GENOA"

NOW IN THE COLLECTION OF M. RYERSON







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COROT  
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THE LOUVRE







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"L'ATELIER"

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quently the struggle has been for ambitious talents to get some place in this machinery which would insure them for life a safe position, but under military conditions of obedience and discipline and the keeping out of all others who, knowingly or not, believed in independence of thought or feeling. The reason or secret of the constant opposition to this group of men of ours is thus a perfectly natural one. They were forced into an antagonism from which morally and intellectually they could not escape, nor did they always know how much they were in opposition. They pursued what are called ideals, which allow little compromise. It may be said that they were imprudent, that they might have yielded some few higher ideals to practical success, but in reality they were mostly unaware of the danger of their tendencies. They scarcely knew how they were the successors of the great artists who were recommended and preached by the government schools. As Fromentin has put it, the Academy and the school on the contrary, clearly saw behind these men the hated traditions of Rubens and Rembrandt. They, on the contrary, like the devotees of science, saw only the disinterested end which they pursued with difficulty and mostly in adversity. Nor can we blame them any more than we do the mathematician or the astronomer whose calculations

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aim at abstract results. We know, and they know too, that there is no absolute mathematics in practice, but it is only by the pursuit of such abstractions that the progress of our practical science advances. These men are bound together more lastingly to us, than they could have been to themselves, by the opposition of the great government influences which still rule in France. Their not being in the authorised list of producers of art leaves the official art of France relatively barren of production and more of a mere common-school force. The names of these men also are those which have been carried throughout the world. Their names are known far beyond the limits they knew themselves, and their fame is as great as if they had not been Frenchmen. In some form or other all outside art has been influenced by them, and their names are types of forms of art. With all of them, except perhaps the favourite, Diaz, a certain moral dignity, a certain human value, is part of the very texture, the fibre of their work. Through its weight it has helped to carry their influence out of the fashion of their native land. It has made more sympathetic some of the beauties which they tried to embody. So that however partial and deficient were some of them, it may be said of their works, in the words the Greeks used for their favourite poets, that "many

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times the immortal gods themselves had chosen to be seated at their hearthstone.”

We have said that these men have made, to a certain extent, almost all of us. All modern painters or draughtsmen to whom the word *values* is a guide owe something—sometimes a great deal—to the fact that these men carried the older tradition through the darkest part of the nineteenth century. They helped also foreign artists of all kinds who could not get government instruction in France, or who disliked it, or from some manner or other—sometimes mere accident—were excluded from it. One of my friends who with me pursued for many years the modern scientific study of the relations of light and colour, with the hope of using it for our work, missed his chance at the government school, as one of these men did, by the mere slip of a little formula. He drew under the model whose picture he had made for the competition, the black stand, the cube of polished wood on which the model stood. He made it black, with a reflection—and that excluded his drawing. This anecdote is a way of stating how small the reason was by which a foreigner or a native might not get under government instruction. Many of them, as did my friend, regretted it somewhat; he would have been anyhow an independent man in meaning and in

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thought, but he would have liked to have had, as it were, some work in what he thought was rather the enemy's camp.

In one of my lectures I think I referred to one of our artists, to Winslow Homer, as having been influenced by these men. It is so true that away far back in the fifties, not being able to see the originals, he drew from the French lithographs we had here, which were almost entirely devoted to the reproduction of the work of these men. At that time we had but very few examples in the country, exceedingly few, perhaps it might be said none, of Corot, none of Rousseau. By chance there happened to be a few Millets. The foundation then in great part of such an independent talent—I might say more than talent, of such a genius as Mr. Winslow Homer's—refers back then to this school and to the teachings, the inevitable teachings, even from studying them in translations.

On that, as a proof again of what I wish students to understand, is built a form of painting as absolutely different as it could possibly be; a thoroughly American system of painting, a representation of American light and air, of everything that makes the distinction; even the moral fibre and character of New England being depicted all through the picture, whether it be the



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rocks and the sea, or the men who hang about them.

Those are the lessons that these men give. I only refer to that to encourage you, those of you who are students, to look to these men for the principles rather than sometimes the practice of their work. For of course they, like all men of the nineteenth century, almost without exception, painted not so well as they ought to. That is to say that the older traditions, those beautiful traditions which allow you to see a work of a Flemish painter over four hundred years old in all its freshness, had departed. The real intention of oil painting had been more or less disfigured. The use of unfortunate colours prepared for them by new chemistry, and also by traders on the new chemistry, has changed most of their pictures. I am old enough to remember some of the famous ones and to be shocked at the way they look to-day.

But as I reflect, there are exceedingly important points to be dwelt upon which these men touch. As I have been questioned by students outside of my lectures upon the point, I want to bring again to your attention the question of the difference between the study and the picture. In reality the question is very simple, but like all very simple questions, it is veiled at corners—

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veiled at certain places—by our using words which do not cover particular points. It may be said that the invention of the frame, but let us go back, the study then, let us say, is a copy, or pursuit, of a part of Nature with the mere intention of knowing well for one's self what one happens to be looking for. The study may cover all the impressions that you receive as far as you are capable, or only a few. It is evidently quite possible to make your study without colour, or with more or less colour. It is possible to pursue your study in the shapes of outline. It is possible to pursue your study in the mere shape of form. It is possible to care for nothing for the moment but the values of certain places as you go along. It is possible to look only for the colours. It is possible in a larger way to make a note of the time of day, to make a note of the relation of sunlight and shadow. It is possible—as in the drawings which I once had in my hands for a few hours, the drawings of the note-books of Sir Joshua Reynolds—it is possible to make a study of how much space the middle tone occupies in what you see, of where the highest light is, and how many times the highest light will occur in such and such proportion, of how far the dark can be in the middle of what you are looking at, and how far you can move it to the side. All this is in the sketch-

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books of Sir Joshua done with the point of a pencil; a mere scribble, and a little circular line run round such a space, or an irregular one in case he wished to insist on the irregularity of distribution; all these ways are studies, and do not by my definition make a picture. We might say that the difference is made in this way: The invention of a frame—that is to say the rectangular border, or the circular border, or any other border which you wish to choose—but these are the evident ones known to all mankind, and mostly the rectangular border or frame. The frame decides the question, for there is no frame in Nature. The moment that you begin to set your picture or your study on a square piece of paper, and with relation to that square piece of paper, you have decided already an artistic conventional formula, because if we carried out logically what we see we should not have a square result. Hence, sometimes the very honest student is astonished at finding that his study is uneven and the corners left blank, or they are not even corners, because as long as he really gives his real impression they are of necessity irregular. They represent maybe corners and ovals blended together. Even I myself, with fifty or sixty years of studying and sketching from Nature, find it difficult when I am making nothing but a really conscientious study of

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a new view in place, to remember to fill in the corners of my paper and canvas. If once I have not done it I find it impossible to be sure of what was there. In so far I am pleased when that happens to me. It shows me that I am still a faithful observer of Nature. Hence, as you know, the so-called impressionists, men who have been trying to develop still further the representations of light and colour through various mechanisms have had great difficulty at once with their frames, because if they were were absolutely truthful there would be no frame; there cannot be any. They have to step from Nature into the world of art. And perhaps you know the difficult plight of many of my friends with regard to dodging that question. Some of the weaker-minded ones, and the more logical ones too, have painted their frames in different ways, have painted their frames in different colours, have lopped over the frame, and have thought that by lopping over the frame that the suggestion of irregularity would be sufficient, but none of them have ever had the courage to paint in the outline of the frame which they really saw, because it would be too ugly, too impossible for the human mind.

How the frame first came about, I mean how it came by this arbitrary shape, I do not know. I have not as yet found an adequate explanation. I have cross-

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questioned without result so-called savages with whom I have lived, and I have watched their ways of work and their ideas of representation of Nature, and I do know that at some remote period they invented a rectangular frame, but that they did for decoration. When they came to representation, the so-called savages never tried to make what we call a picture, or a realization of something in a place, and that place the frame. They were trying always to make a symbol, or what we call a drawing. I have seen even their children make very beautiful drawings, mostly in the sand, sometimes when given a pencil. The difficulty of the pencil was in their way, that is to say, it was an unaccustomed form of friction. They represented both the real outline and the suggestion of form in a single sweep very much like what we see in very accomplished draughtsmen, in Raphael for instance, or Ingres and so forth, and the two extremes met in the savage child. All my savage artist was after was to give the symbol which represented the animal or whatever it was that he tried to show and never was able. I don't believe that the savage has understood the frame. Therefore I don't know when it began. There may have been the including of the picture or symbol inside of the decorative frame, and then the passage from that to our realisation of Nature. That realisation from Nature

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went on in the middle of the last century in a form which we know. Men like Meissonier for instance, struggled in a race with the photograph. The photograph or the whole system of photography was being developed. They followed in the track which our ancestors have followed for so long, a sort of struggle with Nature. We see it far back with Leonardo. We see the way through the scale from then, the anxiety to have a record of all the facts of Nature.

The photograph then is the other racer in the course, and it might be some day that the vision of Nature would be still nearer if the photograph—the machine—should be able to give a little accurate colour. Then perhaps that line will be cut off and some great revolt of feeling might come. But that is a mere manner of letting you understand that I do not mean that the men of the other schools were unjustifiable. They were following, as I say, the conquest of Nature and not the conquest of art. They were artists and they thought that they followed art more, but they really in their own way were trying to justify themselves by their correct appreciation of Nature.

One thing more as I close the subjects of our talks. I don't mean to diminish any one's part nor take part of any one away. Nor is it necessary because we like



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a man very much that we should think him bigger than others. He may be smaller and on account of that smallness better fitted to ourselves. It is evident that the life with the greater beings cannot be so easy. That is the reason why in presenting our dear old friend Diaz, I have still kept to the fact that he was relatively a small man compared to most of his friends, but a charming creature, a man whose work is fit to be placed anywhere, to give you that same charm that you get, let us say from flowers. Is there anything against the flower that it should not have the intellectual significance of other things that we look at? And that is always worth thinking of. The smaller man may have his own perfect existence, and for our benefit Decamps, whom I do not wish to consider on the same high plane with Delacroix (and who might perhaps have reached a higher plane of his own if he had lived), Decamps has shown us—and that is what I insisted on in our representations on the screen—the use of certain formulæ, and in those smaller formulæ he is a great man. He has his own life and his own interpretations just as much as the greatest. That lesson ought to satisfy all pupils. There is no school, if one may so say, in Nature or in art that we can absolutely measure.





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No attempt has been made to give detailed references to Corot, Daubigny, Decamps, Delacroix, Diaz, Dupré, Millet, and Rousseau within the Lectures of which they are the subject matter. Under the name of each artist mention is made of the pages in the particular Lecture devoted entirely or in part to said artist.

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